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# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY  
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EDITED BY  
LEONARD HUXLEY



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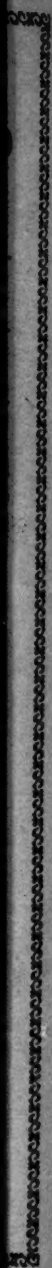
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# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

FEBRUARY 1932.

FROM 'WORKS AND DAYS': THE DIARY OF  
'MICHAEL FIELD.'

EDITED BY T. STURGE MOORE.

## II. 'MICHAEL FIELD' AND ROBERT BROWNING

(Continued).

May 9, 1888. Katherine Bradley writes :

We found the drawing-room at Palace Gate full of flowers.<sup>1</sup> Under one of Pen's statues, in a pale blue roc's egg, were our carnations. Mr. Browning came in greeting us as 'his two dear Greek women.' He opened *Ω TEKNON* a feint of kisses. Ardently then and afterwards he spoke of the Sapphics, expressing especial interest in Tiresias, which he himself had once thought of treating. When I remarked that I wished he had treated it, he said, 'No : it ought to be treated by a woman.' He said to Edith, that he liked the second series of poems even better than the first, and prophesied that they would make their mark. But he refuses to write a preface. We must remember we are Michael Field. Again he said, 'Wait fifty years.'

July 4, 1888. [There are entries by both Edith and Katherine.

They have been mingled to give a consecutive narrative : where necessary the writer of a particular phrase or paragraph is indicated.]

Katherine Bradley :

It was on Monday after a mid-summer of cold, heat and thunder, rain and blight—we asked to go to Palace Gardens. Ah, but we were happy!—deep mowing grass of happiness was ours. Three poets together—conventionality and ceremony put away—we shaped life divinely—and talked of poets past, present, and to come. It is wonderful to watch the Old's serene, pondering, almost awed gaze at P.<sup>2</sup> The young face responds frankly, the trembling hands hid from sight and no colour on the quiet face, while I glow and thrill like a sunset.

Miss Browning made a long crowing noise of joy and astonishment, when we entered—fresh from the pouring rain. He too, when he came in, did not know whether to thank us or not. At lunch we talked of 'Whoever wakes in the city,' and they both

<sup>1</sup> Browning's birthday was on May 7.

<sup>2</sup> P. for Puss, a pet name for Edith.

seemed pleased with my genuine appreciation of the poem. After talk of Ruskin, 'A very attaching man,' Matthew Arnold, etc., the Old grew meditative an instant, and then said, 'What would the world be without such people as Matthew Arnold, Ruskin and Michael Field?' I said he must not put Michael's with such names as these. But he stoutly maintained that he had been disinterested in the discovery, as in Matthew Arnold's case. His limitless belief in us is appalling. What indeed is so appalling as the 'Be ye, therefore, perfect' of love.

There was wonderful, passionate praise of the Chartreuse and its precious liqueur, which Edith tasted—a golden drink full of the piercing flavours of many good creatures of God. Our talk was much of De Musset; all his life he had regretted not being present at his discourse at the Academy. His wife went; he had an engagement and did not give it up. 'Such a man—it would have been worth while to see him, even for three moments.' Matthew Arnold had told him that at sixty-two he hoped to give up the inspectorship and devote himself to poetry. Devote himself to poetry at sixty-two, it seemed a strange notion, 'when one thinks of the flowery, bowery, bewigged sort of person a poet is usually conceived to be.' Our good host covered our plates with strawberries, telling us at the same time of the Italian form of imprecation, 'May he want sugar to his strawberry.' After lunch he drew us both down beside him on the sofa in the drawing-room, and would not let us go, even when the kind Miss Browning dropped a lot of books from the book-shelves, where she was searching for some French volumes for us. He held us tight, and by and by read us some of the loveliest little poems of De Musset, very quietly, with a low voice, full of 'recueillement' and now and then a brief smile at some touch of exquisite playfulness. When he heard we were writing prose, he said, 'Take care you do not derogate.' I asked what models should be taken for prose comedy. He was not much for models:—'Prick it out yourself. Trust yourself.' He promised me [Edith] to play the next time we meet, some of Galluppi's Toccatas. Think of hearing them played by the poet, who has opened to us all their reserves of pity, of dreariness, their notes of far-off festivity and regret. At last he was forced to go; he hoped we should come again 'under happier auspices.' We could not be so happy when he had gone. We stayed and talked with Sarianna about Pen and his father.

Edith writes :

He is always the poet with us; it seems impossible that he goes behind a shell of worldly behaviour and commonplace talk when he faces society, yet so it is. In his own room, in his study,

he is Rabbi ben Ezra, with his inspired, calm, triumphant old age. His eyes rest on one with their strange, passive vision, traversed sometimes by an autumnal geniality, mellow and apart, which is beautiful to meet. Yet his motions, his touch are full of impetuosity and warmth, and contrast with his steady outlook and his 'grave kindly aspect.'

March 6, 1889. Katherine Bradley writes :

I went to see my vivid old damask rose Miss Swanwick. We spoke of *Long Ago* and the old gentleman. She told me how, once at a dinner, he had said to her, 'I wish you could have known her. . . . It was something, for fifteen years to have the society of such a woman, and I valued it ; for while we were at Florence, I never left her for an evening.' He spoke to Miss Swanwick of the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. 'It seems to me, that if I had written such sonnets, they would have burned a hole in my desk,' she said. But the poets had been wedded two years before Elizabeth Barrett placed them in her husband's hands. Then, had he consulted his own feelings, he would have kept them sacred from the light, but he remembered he was the guardian of his wife's genius—and bade her publish them. Choosing this sublime old maid for this deep confidence of his nuptial life, is a sign of the old gentleman's fine faculty for selection—the fool or insensitive person never looks where he is talking. On Tuesday, February 12, we went to De Vere Gardens to lunch. The poet was dissatisfied with his own moods and the psychic entertainment he could give us. But he was infinitely sympathetic over *Long Ago*. He spoke to me of the tragic largeness of the lyrics. As he tore us down to lunch, he stopped us before Pen's *Dryope*<sup>1</sup> and said it had been worthily sung ; referring to Edith's 'There was laughter soft and free.'<sup>2</sup> We showed him the archaic head of Sappho.<sup>3</sup> Miss Browning could not forgive the smirk ; but the old gentleman looked at it with thoughtful consideration. 'If I were an artist I should like to paint what the artist strove to express, but could not. For instance the firm, round chin shows that this is a young face and the smirk is an attempt to reproduce a sweet smile, and the great eyes show that he was struck by the beauty and size of Sappho's eyes—that he felt them beautiful. . . .' He also said of the third batch of Sapphics, that they seemed much better to him than the others—there was certainly no falling off.

Katherine Bradley writes :

Yesterday, Friday, April 26, 1889, we had our first informal, friendly lunch at De Vere Gardens. The April sunshine was con-

<sup>1</sup> A picture by Browning's son.

<sup>2</sup> *Long Ago*, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> Reproduced on the cover of *Long Ago*.

tinuous and splendid. Mr. Browning took up the seated Sappho<sup>1</sup> and began to read the fine Greek MS. After lunch a Miss Heaton called; though extremely quiet, she had the faculty of rekindling old images and pictures. Once, Mr. Browning had been for one week in the same house as the Duchess of Cambridge: she wishing to be gracious to him, asked, 'How is Mrs. Browning?' 'That was years after I had lost her.' Such a story as this justifies Matthew Arnold's description of the British aristocracy as barbarians. Anent public speaking and dinners, he referred to the occasion when Talfourd's *Ion* was issued. Landor and Wordsworth were present and the health of the youngest poet present was drunk—that youngest being Robert Browning, then twenty-two. It was evidently much to him, to have those great poets drinking his health. He will never respond for literature; but once at the Temple, unexpectedly, allusion was made to him which demanded response, and he contrived to make an adequately pretty speech, I fancy. He alluded to Spenser's:

'Where whylome went the templar knights to byde  
Till they decayed through pride';

to Shakespeare's red and white rose scene in the gardens, Henry IV, Part II, Act II, Scene IV; to Charles Lamb's old benchers in the Temple. After the caller had gone, I sat down on a low stool and told him the plot of *Carloman*. (His eyes looked like Corot's pools in their gravity and stillness.<sup>2</sup>) He listened gravely, feeling and realising the problem. He said he would read some lines that an admirer had sent him to judge—we should judge them—the letter was of the usual kind, written in grief after bereavement. In his youth Mr. Browning had belonged to a glee-club, under the management of the parish clerk. They sung a poem of Tom Moore's in which occurred the line: 'And flowers . . . gathered in Heaven.' To save the morality of the piece, for the flowers were to garland a lady's brow, the old clerk substituted, ' . . . gathered in a wood.' Browning mournfully remarked, that we must say the admirer's verses were gathered in a wood. Then we spoke of joy, not grief, being the heart of literature. He told us that once he had heard an organ playing a tune that went exactly to a chorus of Aristophanes—chorus in *Plutus* (Cario and the chorus bring up the rear in antic dance), of which he gave us the delicious balmy lilt. Then as we were twisting up the branches of the seven-branched candlestick (the staircase) to the bedroom, we heard his soft touch at the piano. But he would not be persuaded to play to us on our return.

<sup>1</sup> The frontispiece of *Long Ago*. A reproduction of the figure on the well-known Greek vase at Athens.

<sup>2</sup> Edith added this sentence.

This was a blessed day—he was genially contemplative of the past—and beholding it seemed to find it very good. We were glad of the visitor, she led to talk undisturbed. We have so much to tell him there is clash and convulsion. I felt when he talked to Miss Heaton that he is used serenely to dominate the society he enters. He will not engage himself to go again to Venice: he has been nine times, and appears to cling to his wide, rich palace rooms at home.

May 9, 1889. Katherine Bradley relates a visit to the Private View of the Academy.

On Friday morning, Edith and I started for Kensington for my new dress of blond fawn, and a little before noon we were in the Academy. . . . In the afternoon in a dense crowd I caught sight of him. He turned quickly and we hastened together. He introduced the fair Venetian, his daughter-in-law. Later, we encountered just as [Fairfax?] Murray was drawing my attention to a beautiful nude figure of a girl with a lyre, which he called an Egyptian Sappho. He dragged me by the arm, and stood gazing at it, with and by me, full of many thoughts. Then he turned with me to a bronze by a friend of his; careful, 'but not such beautiful work as the other.' He looked across at P.<sup>1</sup> (his glance is a travelling and a passage). When we parted, we recognised that he was proud to manifest to the world that we were his friends, and we believed in him, in the deep scriptural sense.

July 12, 1889. Mrs. Cooper was dying. Katherine Bradley writes:

I shall never forget the silent grace of our friends' welcome. No crowing chant from Sarianna and the old gentleman behind, so silent that I hardly knew he was in the room—their hearts were as muted bells, full of soft rejoicing—quieted by perfect sympathy. Afterward, when with tender impatience Mr. Browning said we had enough of that—with reference to the details of illness at home—he enquired about the book<sup>2</sup>—and a fine conversation began. . . . He would certainly have the book. 'Ah, Mr. Browning, you will not care so much for the song book—it is not Greek.' 'Try me,' was the emphatic response. I began to talk of Mrs. Carlyle, 'No, you would not have liked her much. Though I know of no one who could have been more safely trusted with her. She would have tried to pick holes in you. . . . She had a fine forehead, black eyes, deep brown complexion' (not a happy nose, from the old gentleman's description) 'and black hair.' Miss Browning told indignantly how a Keats had been lent to her, and she had found it 'the work of one who had over-eaten himself with cake.' . . . When

<sup>1</sup> Edith.

<sup>2</sup> *Underneath the Bough*, 1892.

Edith told how I had a friend, who I knew spoke ill of me, yet whom I continued to like, the Poet said, 'I do not care what people say of me, but I do not like them to speak against those I love.' His bearing was majestic and animated, the occasion of wonder in me. Even then, though I did not know it, he was awaiting the *Athenæum*, containing words of his to FitzGerald,<sup>1</sup> so appalling that after we had read them, our spirits lay as dead at his feet for three days. It was as if we had been playing fearlessly about the thunder-guarded throne, and had discovered that therefrom a fiery shaft had been that instant sped. . . . It is precious to the world that there should be such passion in it, such fidelity, such undeviating, remorseless wrath. What championship! It was as if FitzGerald had exposed and profaned his dead. One hears the groan with which he covers away such sorrow—ere he falls on the injurer with Swift's masterly stroke. Suddenly from being shut away in our dull bit of Surrey, we felt ourselves removed to the white central point of London life—to the mid-edge of the intensest passion there.

January 16, 1890. A conversation with William Sharpe.

. . . Talk came up on the close confidential relations between Browning and his sister. He so feared the turbulence of his own nature, that all his correspondence passed through her hands as a safeguard against such expression as might stir up newspaper warfare. When he wrote the unfortunate<sup>2</sup> lines on FitzGerald, he sent them secretly to the post by his servant, and Sarianna had the triumph of convincing him that her supervision was wiser than his impulse. They lived, said Sharpe, in comradeship.

August 2, 1889. Edith Cooper writes:

We arrived at De Vere Gardens at about three o'clock; he was out, his slippers announced it to anxious Sarianna. She was indefatigable in talking time down. . . . We saw a photograph

<sup>1</sup> TO EDWARD FITZGERALD.

I chanced upon a new book yesterday:

I opened, and where my finger lay

'Twixt page and uncut page, these words I read

—Some six or seven at the most—and learned thereby

That you, FitzGerald, whom by ear and eye

She never knew, 'thanked God my wife was dead.'

Ay, dead! and were yourself alive, good Fitz,

How to return you thanks would task my wits:

Kicking you seems the common lot of curs—

While more appropriate greeting lends you grace:

Surely to spit there glorifies your face—

Spitting—from lips once sanctified by Hers.

—The *Athenæum*, July 8, 1889.

This has been re-published in the *Week End Book* of the Nonesuch Press.

<sup>2</sup> FitzGerald's remark occurred in a private letter. The real offence was its publication after his death and before Browning's.



from Watts' head of him, not conceivably like. Also one taken by Groves, his old man-servant; once a little plough-boy, who rang the even bell for [Canon] Knox Little, two years, not forgetting it in work or play. While in service he got artistic hints from Pen, and impulse to become a photographer from Smiles' *Self Help*. Tea came at 4.30 and the Botticelli table had our two disconsolate cups on it. Then he came—haste about his white hairs; Mrs. Orr had promised to drive him home, there had been a delay. His love sped to us through movement and words. We told him his picture had been with us. When he heard that mother would like to see it, although destined for another, he gave it to Sim zealously, 'There;—you shall have it.' Sarianna also gave up her photo. 'Go write your name properly as I have done,' said her brother. It is a good likeness, but the cap is an ugly erection of flowers. 'She is not wearing anything like this pretty cap,' he said, and touched the nice grey thing, with its peach and grey ribbons. When Sim said she was pleased he liked it, he answered it was well the compliment had been to the right person. He had just whispered 'Qu'elle est belle,' to Mrs. Orr in comment on the maid at a friend's house. Mrs. Orr stayed behind him a minute, to please mistress and daughter with a poet's comment on one of them, and was dumbfounded to learn her mistake, when she joined him with the question, 'Which was it?' This he told with amused eyes and a little shake of his beard. He was wroth—yes faith, heartily—at the ill-natured review in the *Spectator*.<sup>1</sup> He hoped it was not that which kept us from issuing a new edition. He was concerned and fearful lest we had suffered. I assured him 'No'—I was nearly slain by a review in the *Athenæum*, when I was but a child, after that I had never been hurt by any judgement; it had killed such sense of pain entirely. He told us of his own youthful disappointments. *Pauline* had been reviewed generously by Alan Cunningham in the *Athenæum*; when *Paracelsus* came out the young author was sure of notice,—and only had two lines in 'recent verse'! Browning evidently dislikes unsigned articles and the fluctuating criticism on an author's successive works. What respect he feels for the *Spectator* ('well known for its puritanism') is due to the unanimity of its appraisements, from the influence of one mind. This brings it nearer to the ideal of continuous criticism and responsible signature. One year one man, the next another reviews an author's books—hence the perplexing contradictions of their fate. *Long Ago* was no longer on the table, it had been lent to Mendelssohn's grandson, a poet, restive 'foolishly' under the classical tuition at Balliol. Browning wrote to him, to charm him into willingness to work for knowledge honours, while he had the precious opportunity. The young man called and

<sup>1</sup> Of *Long Ago*.

*Long Ago* was lent to him, to teach him the uses of Greek learning! 'Sarianna was not gracious and did not want to let it go.' Indeed the dear soul was bleating after it. When we spoke of returning some books, her brother exclaimed derisively, 'Are you afraid of Sarianna?' He assured us solemnly that he had never been able to say, that he could have done better work if he had had the opportunity—throughout life he had been blessed with good conditions for work. As we passed *Dryope*, he said his daughter thought *XEΛUNH*<sup>1</sup> the most beautiful poem in the book. 'Yes,' said Sarianna, 'the simple creature had *Long Ago* for the sake of those lines.' Our friends have no idea where they will spend their holidays—he is hard to stir. 'I should like to take you two to Venice, and show its beauties to you—that would be an inducement.' Pen and his wife love hospitality. 'I am not like that,' mused the old poet. 'I am not hospitable in their sense. I don't mind dining with thirty or forty people every evening and it's done with. But I do not like to bring them into my inner circle. I like a few people immensely and want to have them with me.' So much for the outside of our converse, 'the rest is silence.' O Hamlet, love is holier than death and as unalterable. N.B.—The Old likes carraway cake.

Katherine Bradley writes:

It was delightful to learn that Hindoos care greatly for his poems, and that great numbers of Hindoo examinations in English are set from them. His new book is to be called a *New Series of Jocoseria*. It is all ready, only a manuscript to be made. 'But I am more interested now in what other people do, than in what I do myself,' said our dear friend, sadly. We shall never ask him to play again; the music is still in his head, but the hands no longer execute—'Perhaps when some good day comes that will never come.' We cannot bear to think that age has stiffened the hands. But he will go on writing, he hopes, till the end; to cease would be to him true death. I told how we never wrote a song without thinking how he would react to it, and how we hoped to have finished a bookful before he returned. And he sighed piercing sighs, full of warm new grief—not youth's sighs—age and death so close—and parts of life still so sweet. And he begged us to come again soon. He did not like saying good-bye. Even on our way to 'Mrs. Muggins,' he would like us to come in and have bread and cheese with him! . . . When I said we should not go home that night, he said, 'worse things might happen than that he should have us to stay with him.'

He spoke of the sons of great men; he had met the sons of Words-

<sup>1</sup> *Long Ago*, p. 111. See reference to Pen's *Dryope*.



worth, Coleridge, Southey, Shelley and Burns—the latter at the Carlyles'. He was rewarded after he had left the room, (he had sung one of his father's songs,) by 'Can this be the son of Burns?' Many of Burns' letters cannot be printed. One was brought to Carlyle, apparently in Mr. Browning's presence; Carlyle shook his head and said, 'Oh no, this must never be published.' Oh! De Vere Gardens—our New Place, Stratford.

[Mrs. Cooper had died on August 19, 1889.]

December 12, 1889. Edith Cooper writes:

Llannie has just sent us the news of our poet's illness. Sim has gone through the dark, with letters and a telegram. Is this year going to bereave us again—yet again, O God? I should have more hope, save for our last meeting; he was so gentle—as autumn is before dropping; presageful, penetrative gentleness, which has somewhat of remembrance, in the manner and the look. He said of our song book, 'Try me'; shall we never hear the caressing voice give judgement and praise? It will half-kill our poetry and make all the deep parts of our love memorial, which means that the value of life strikes the ground and is over (at least as the young estimate it). His kiss comes to my lips again, as I think of him—that seal of his comprehension of one's womanhood—flawless in stamp, tender with knowledge, warm as all action is that is divine and reverent. Perhaps he will die and never think of us. He 'dared to hope' last spring, that we loved him. As I hoped to have my mother's smile before she fell asleep—I hope he will think of us. I have always loved him with deep communion of spirit—Isaiah's 'way of Holiness' seemed to span the air that divided us and we walked thereon without speech, without fear. *Prospice!* He is no longer 'nearing the place'—he is there. It makes me stiff, till I think of the beyond, and her breast, that 'soul of his soul.' She was a woman, a poet. His coming will be all gain to her—To him!—can I wish that he should die, as I did for my Darling's blessedness? Perhaps there is a remote strength in me that could say yes—but it is very far away among the hills. He is so great, I am tearless as I write of him—the moment I slip back into myself, the tears burn. He wrote for us,

'I have heard a team  
'Of swans, so deathward chanting breast the stream.'

I wonder if his last hours will be harmonic, if they will have glory and impulse.

How strange, in spite of weeping I feel cold. Sim returns. The *Telegraph* in a review of *Asolando* says that, by the most recent

reports, he is recovering. The new poems are dedicated to Mrs. Arthur Bronson—the rest is silence once again. Ah, I remember, she is his old friend of Asolo.

‘Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm : for love is strong as death : jealousy is cruel as the grave : the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it ; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned.’ He has written of a kiss :

‘Good-night, God bless you, Good-bye !’

December 13, 1889. Katherine Bradley to Mr. J. M. Gray :

. . . He is gone ever-green to God—full of courage and energy, to that great world of thought and love. We could not have willed for him a more perfect death—dying on that Thursday for which you were waiting so breathlessly—able to receive the welcome given to his new book ; and passing at the close of its birthday to the resumption of all that is vital in our past that we call Heaven.

Edith Cooper writes :

We went, with the dark rain in our faces, to the reading-room, just after nine. As I left the house, I recalled the drear lightless morning of our darling’s death and felt strange and braced. At first we could find no news. Sim went to *The Times*. She said in a slow whisper, ‘It is all over.’ I read ; my breath was quick with pain and tears. . . . Our telegram would reach Venice this morning. No words could contain the shadow of my love for him—they could bring me to his thoughts, that is all—yes all, love cries with intolerable hunger. I hope he thought of us, but such hope is a vital kind of despair. His death was a perfect thought of God’s. How I wish I had been less proud when away from him and trusted more in his friendship. But my love was so great, it fortified itself with walls against weakness or mere familiarity. When I was with him, all my nature issued and was free to his touch and his eyes. Reserve with me must be as utterly broken, as the rock by the stream when I love indeed and am close to the beloved one.

December 30, 1889. Katherine Bradley writes :

. . . I have been praying :—what he has done, what gives him Westminster Abbey, in so far as it is given him by the English people—is this, he has given them access to the Spiritual world, quite apart from Revelation—he has shown them the deep things of Revelation as in *Karshish*, but he has found new pathways to God. . . .

January 2, 1890. At Miss Swanwick's. Edith Cooper writes :

Here are some of her (Miss Swanwick's) memories of the 'Old.' She once saw him angry to fierceness, when he told how he and his wife had promised that they would communicate each with each after her death, if it were possible—how such speech had never passed between them and yet a medium dared say she spoke to *him*. It was a sacrilege against love. Miss Swanwick once asked his opinion of Walt Whitman. He thought Walt dangerous; although he always did all in his power to help young writers (surely he confounded the age of the author with the late publishing of *Leaves of Grass*) he could not recommend him. He seemed shocked at Mrs. Gilchrist's expression, that he was carrying on Christ's work. Strange, this judgement! 'The virile Robert Browning could not give recognition to the frank American—the Comrade!' I should never have thought it possible to shock the Old. Tennyson said of Walt, that he had not the first requisite of a poet, he could not sing.

January 4, 1890. Arthur Symons writes :

You have of course seen the birthday letter of Browning to Tennyson which has recently been published. Theodore Watts told me how he had just been visiting Tennyson, and how Tennyson had shown him the letter, and how he had said, stroking it tenderly with his hand, 'How kind, how good of such a great man to write to me like that.' I, on my part, remember well, in what a deeply moved tone Browning spoke to me, four days before leaving England for the last time, of a birthday letter he had from Tennyson, 'It is too sacred to show to anyone—it was inexpressibly kind—no one would believe what a letter I have had from Tennyson.'

May 14, 1890. A visit to Miss Heaton. Edith Cooper writes :

So much talk of the Old, and how he longed to take Miss Barrett to Italy, reflecting he could only do so by marrying her. . . . He was slow in taking to society after her death, but the inevitable magnetism of the world of men drew him at last to his right place within it. Miss Heaton spoke of the 'elastic ring' of Mr. Browning's wonderful voice. When Mrs. Browning saw Talfourd's portrait of herself (done for Miss Heaton) in its finished state, she exclaimed, 'How beautiful!'; expressing thereby merely a contrast with all others, which were libels. The first time Miss Heaton saw Miss Barrett, talk fell on contemporary Poets, and Miss Barrett spoke with reticent warmth of Robert Browning's poems. She kept him waiting a year before she could bring herself to overcome her fears as to her health.

[Extract from a letter written by Miss Heaton to Katherine Bradley about Mrs. Browning.]

July 26. No year given.

. . . It was said of her, that she had the intellect of an angel and the heart of a child. 'The little name,'—was—Ba—(a, long). Mr. Browning usually calls her, I think, 'my wife.' If Miss Browning speaks of her to me, it often is as 'dear Ba.' It sounds as natural as possible;—it recalls the time,—when many—most of whom have left us,—called her by that name.

[Miss Browning kept up a correspondence with Michael Field after the Poet's death. The following extracts may be of interest.]

No date.

. . . Which did he prefer of the *Asolando* poems? I can hardly say—only I know that on the very last Sunday he was up, before the last, Fannie<sup>1</sup> and I were alone (she had been unwell and was lying down), he came into the bedroom and had afternoon tea with us, and Fannie asked him to read to her—she wanted something from the new volume just coming out, she said. He fetched the proof-sheets and read *Rephan*, the *Reverie*, and finally, the *Epilogue*—half-ashamed that the latter might seem boastful; as he read it, a cold feeling crept over me, though I said nothing, that those lines might be a real farewell to life—as they were.

No date.

. . . . When our Queen was telling Robert how much she admired his wife, he said, 'Those who only knew her by her works did not know the best part of her.' The Queen replied very earnestly, 'Oh, how easily I can believe that!'

May 30, 1893.

. . . You ask me of Robert's experience of the stage. He was fond of the drama . . . but his experience of the actual realities of the stage of his day was utterly distasteful and disenchanting. He was naturally very pleased at the production of *Strafford*—the play of a very young man, brought out by Macready at Drury Lane, was considered an exploit—but the *Blot* was nothing, from first to last, except a vexation of spirit—he would not allow me to be present at the first night. (I ought to exclude from the black list, Helen Faucit, of whom he could never speak too highly.) The incessant asking for alteration chafed him.

June 23, 1893.

. . . Robert seldom went to the theatre in later years, except to see his friend Salvini, or a play by his well-beloved Tennyson.

<sup>1</sup> His daughter-in-law.

He had not much sympathy with the elaborate decoration and dressing of the Lyceum, but I can answer for his having gone with delight to see a drama of Michael Field's performed <sup>1</sup>—had he still been with us. Do not let either yourself or Edith be discouraged at partial eclipse. Remember the middle part of Robert's career, when none of his works were sold. He outlived it, so will you.

January 3, 1896.

. . . Robert always said he would like to be offered the Laureateship for the pleasure of refusing it. He thought poetry out of and beyond the judgement of politicians, and said he would equally decline the verdict of Mr. Gladstone or Lord Salisbury,—both of whom he admired in their own sphere, but neither of whom he thought capable of understanding poetry.

(*To be continued.*)

<sup>1</sup> This probably refers to their play *A Question of Memory*; produced at the Independent Theatre on October 27, 1893.

## CYPRUS.

BY REV. W. A. WIGRAM, D.D.

THE island of Cyprus was sometimes called 'the Cinderella of the Empire,' but now Cinderella has astonished Dame Britannia by suddenly dashing out of her back kitchen, smashing up the china, and proclaiming that she wants to 'give warning' and cannot be happy another hour in the house! Therefore it may be well to know what the story of the island is, how it comes to be in the Empire, and why the articulate classes at any rate are not content to remain there.

Cyprus is one of those lands that are separate from others, and yet not quite big enough to stand alone. Hence, while always the home of Romance, it is always under some bigger neighbour, or—not unusually—a bone of contention between two bigger neighbours.

Her first appearance in even 'pre-History' is, like most other countries thereabout, in the character of a Minoan colony from Crete; even then, certain great 'megalithic monuments,' of which nobody knows anything save that they are certainly not the Phœnician buildings they were first thought to be, were probably in existence already. As containing a Minoan colony, however, it gave to Crete the copper which gave it its name, and which it can still produce. Vouni on the northern coast was the site of both the 'factory' and the mine, and there the Swedish archæologists still find copper ingots of a peculiar shape that have also been discovered in the Minoan palace of Hagia Triada. The 'palace' of Vouni, though what survives is of far later date, still keeps its Minoan style and plan.

At what we used to call the ancient date of 1500 B.C. the Cretan empire had already fallen after three thousand years of life, and since then Greek, Phœnician, and Egyptian have all had their influence on the isle. It was the first, however, that gave to the place its definite type, and its language, though the Greeks who came here were of an unusual and very primitive stock. They seem to have been older than either the Ionian or Aeolic of our school days, and to have been akin to the Arcadians.

That proto-Hellenic nation was established once on the coast of the Peloponnese, and was able to send out a colony to Cyprus, in the days before the Dorians came down and pushed them up into the hill country, at some period before what we used to call the beginning of the classic period. In later days, in that Homeric



age that is now coming out of legend into sober history, our old friend Teucer, '*Salamina patremque quum fugeret*,' founded his '*ambiguam Salamina*' near to the modern town of Famagusta, after a preliminary raid along the coast of Egypt, where a pirate of very similar name appears on the monuments as Tikkara, about 1200 B.C. At Salamis he was at least credited with establishing an annual human sacrifice—perhaps a foundation rite—which was only definitely abolished by the emperor Hadrian!

Still, such savagery was not in accord with the Hellenic spirit, though they did keep up the venerable custom for longer than is often thought, even at Athens. It was in Cyprus that the innate Hellenic sense of beauty made use of older material, and '*drew forth Cytherea from the flashing foam of the Ægean*,' using the sea-foam that still forms in long rolls on the shore beneath her temple, to be the material for the white limbs of Aphrodite of Paphos. It is true that she is not purely Greek. There is something in her of the aboriginal '*Great Mother*' of Cyprus, whose figure (a stately woman nursing a bull) is one of the main features of the Museum in Nikosia. There is more, perhaps, of Phœnician Astarte, for the cone-shaped symbol of black marble that the Phœnicians brought when they came, and which Tacitus saw when he visited the place, still lies in the mud of a cow-shed in the ruins of the great temple of Paphos. '*Would it be too inappropriate*,' asked the Governor once, '*if we put it up for safety's sake in the courtyard of the local Church of our Lady?*'

Whatever her ancestry, however, it was Greek artistic thought that moulded her, and the myth of sensual Astarte, '*blown softly through the flutes of Greece*,' comes to us as lovable, if naughty, Aphrodite.

Oldest of divinities here, even a Christian padre cannot regret that she has her honour yet, the only one of the Olympian gods to survive. ('*Beloved Pan*,' who still lives in the hearts of his Hellenic peasants, never got into that rather exclusive club.) Still the girls of Paphos anoint the corner-stones of her shrine on the proper day, in honour of '*the Panagía, Aphrodite*' (was there ever so delightful a mixture?). There is at least one church in the island dedicated in her name, and one feels that there must be amusement in Paradise at the fact. Still, on the day that she came up from the sea, youths and maidens go down into the water and come up from it. ('*The Papaz says it commemorates Noah's flood, but we all know better than that!*') Alas that the British

Government, moved by Mrs. Grundy, has insisted that those who thus enact the birth of Aphrodite shall don bathing-dresses for the ceremony, for all ancient authority assures us that Venus never did !

But Cyprus did more than produce Aphrodite. Her great epic poem, the *Cypria*, is utterly lost, but at one time it was counted equal to the *Iliad*, and if illustrations go for anything, was much more popular. It was a sort of introduction to the tale of Troy divine, and its episodes (Paris, Peleus and Thetis, etc.) are far more common on vases than pictures from Homer.

In the classical period, Cyprus was far more under Asian than Hellenic influence. Greece could not stretch out her arm so far, with any effectiveness, and the Larnaka Stele, now in Berlin, shows that Assyria could at least claim to include the island in her empire. In the Persian period, Cyprus played her part—but on the wrong side ! Xerxes drew 150 ships from her, to fight under him at Salamis, and Artemisia of Caria, the Amazon lady, warned him that they would be of little use. Cyprians were always lazy, soft and luxurious ! Still, a little later, she did produce her only warrior hero, Evagoras. He was the king of Cyprus who helped Athens to her feet again after the shock of *Ægospotami*, and who fought single-handed against the might of Persia when Athens ungratefully abandoned her ally, and at the last only submitted ‘as a king to a King.’ It was about the same period that Cyprus produced her great thinker, the most un-Cyprian Zeno, father of the Stoics, a man who certainly was not a prophet in his own country !

After Alexander, the island passed under the Ptolemys of Egypt, and a little later under Rome, in a fashion characteristic of the casual way in which governments do happen in Cyprus, and also of the disreputable reign of jobbery that marks the later republic.

Clodius Pulcher—that young blackguard of good family who was Cicero’s dearest foe—got captured by pirates when on a Mediterranean voyage—a thing that might happen to anybody in those days ! Needing ransom, he applied for a loan to the cadet of the Ptolemy house who was then ruling in Cyprus, and that potentate sent too little. Getting released somehow (Cicero when angered by this gadfly used to infuriate him by asking how it had been managed), he got the senate to vote the annexation of Cyprus in revenge, and then gave Cato the virtuous the job of managing it, to quiet that worthy’s tongue. As the task was worth 8,000 talents, or two million pounds, there was enough to



divide, and Cato gave a small share to the man whom he sent as his deputy—Marcus Brutus, then an undergraduate at Athens university. (Et tu, Brute!) So the island passed under Rome, and Ptolemy the king was pensioned off by being made high priest of Aphrodite at Paphos, a fact that gives us some idea of the income and privileges attached to that office. Later it received a really appropriate ruler, for a time, when Anthony gave it to Cleopatra.

With the Roman empire, though not quite at the beginning of it, there came also Christianity. The first preaching of SS. Paul and Barnabas is known from the Acts, which recount to us the triumph of the apostles over the magician Elymas at Paphos. Later writers tell us how Elymas got his revenge, when St. Barnabas returned to the island after his quarrel with St. Paul. The Apostle, it is said, ventured on attending some of the Greek games at a great festival at Salamis, and there was so scandalised by the slenderness of the attire of the lady competitors (for apparently this was one of the occasions when, as at Olympia, girls were allowed to compete), that he uttered too drastic a protest. Elymas, who was also present, was able to rouse the anger of the mob against him, and the apostle was stoned. This fact, in later days, was of great importance for the church in the island, as appears from its history. In the year 431 at the council of Ephesus, the Archbishop of Cyprus protested at the jurisdiction that the Patriarch of Antioch exercised over him, and was declared independent and self-governing by the council. It may be that this was partly owing to the undoubted facts that Antioch was in bad odour at that council, and that its president—the not too scrupulous Cyril of Alexandria—was willing to oblige an adherent at the cost of an opponent. Certainly Antioch thought so, for in the year 478 a rather turbulent patriarch of that see, Peter the Fuller, tried to reassert his jurisdiction, and it was only the opportune discovery of the relics of St. Barnabas that persuaded the then emperor to decree that the church of the island was indisputably of apostolic foundation, and independent of any other see. The emperor annexed the relics of the saint, and with them what was supposed to be an autograph copy of the Gospel of St. Matthew, discovered in the tomb: the Archbishop (then of Salamis, now of Nikosia), was given the style, though not the actual title of Patriarch—he is addressed as ‘your Beatitude’—with the right to use the imperial sceptre as Crozier, and the imperial red ink in his signature of official documents.

Other Patriarchs have since usurped that last privilege, but to this day the Archbishop regards himself as almost royal, and has been known to tell even a British governor that, if he persists in arresting disorderly Bishops, the Archbishop can no longer be responsible for public order. He had to be told, courteously but firmly, that in these days that responsibility rests upon the government.

The self-governing, or in technical language, 'auto-cephalous' status thus given to the Church in Cyprus has given a precedent that has been followed repeatedly in later days, and it may be said that it is the example of Cyprus that has given its present constitution to the Orthodox Church.

The island thus became a province of the eastern part of the Roman empire, that of Constantinople, and while still remaining so, it produced the third, and perhaps the most remarkable, of the great characters to which it has given birth; Theodora, the girl who, from being a ballet-dancer, rose to be an empress, and perhaps the most effective and able of the long series of women who have held that rank in her city.

The empire of Constantinople, of which Cyprus was now part, was of course Roman in name, but it was Greek in culture throughout, even though the proportion of its citizens who were of Hellenic blood must have been infinitesimally small. Politically, however, it counted as Roman, and thus it is that those 'Greeks' who were descended from its inhabitants called themselves Roman citizens, and were so called by others. The modern Greek may be, in blood, as little of a Roman as he is Hellene, yet he called himself a Roman—Roumi—till yesterday, and was so called by the Turk. It must be owned, *en passant*, that if there is pure Hellenic blood to be found anywhere to-day, it is not in continental Greece, which was thoroughly 'Slavicised' in medieval ages, but in those islands of which Cyprus is one. This empire, Greek in fact and Roman in name, was the solid fact of the early medieval civilisation, which it saved from destruction, and to which its 'Byzants' contributed the sole reliable means of exchange. The Orthodox Church, separated from Rome by its refusal to recognise the claims of the Papacy, was the backbone of this empire.

Thus, when at last the empire passed away, the Church continued as the life of the people, and the Patriarch of Constantinople took the place in their minds that had been the emperor's. So it is a truth, and one that English people need to realise to-day,

that that solid and enduring fact, the Greek sense of nationality, is not based on that brief and brilliant classic period that modern Greeks had pretty well forgotten till Western scholars reminded them of it. It rests on the recollection of that thousand years of Christian empire of which the Orthodox Church was the most important feature, a feature that abides unchanged to-day in at least the Greek mind.

Thus the Cypriot, being an Orthodox Christian, considered himself a citizen of that empire, no matter who ruled the Island. That ruler might be Byzantine, Saracen, Latin, or Turk. The Cypriot remained a 'Roumi.' As a matter of fact, they soon had experience of Saracen raids and rule. In A.D. 647 the Arab Muawiyah was already on its shores. He brought with him, says Mohammedan legend, no less a lady than Khalat-i-sultan, daughter of Abu-bekr and wife of two of the 'Companions' of the Prophet in succession. Her death as a martyr, in battle against the infidel, had been foretold by the Prophet himself, 'what time she was searching his blessed head for lice, and he slept and saw visions.' Now the prophecy was fulfilled, for when her menfolk were in battle 'against the Genoese Kafirs,' says the Chronicle with grand disregard of chronology, the lady's mule stumbled over a root and she came a cropper 'and broke her pellucid neck.' As this was as near as she was like to get to death in battle, she was hailed as a martyr, and the 'tekke of Um Haram' the 'Holy Mother' stands to this day near Larnaka to testify to it. It is true that infidels say that the great stones over her tomb are really one of the megalithic monuments of the island; what matter? Muawiyah's visit was no more than a raid, but by 688, forty years later, Saracens were in real occupation of Cyprus, and held it till the imperial revival under Nicephorus Phocas in 960, when it returned to Constantinople. Thereafter, it was in the happy state of having no history, till it comes on the romantic stage with a vengeance, with its capture by Richard Cœur-de-Lion in 1191.

Cyprus was then in the hands of an adventurer, one Isaak, a cadet of the imperial house of Comnenus, who had gained possession by questionable means and was of hardly doubtful character. He was known as 'Kyrios Isaak' by his subjects, a name of which the Crusaders made 'Kirsak.' He is said to have been 'Omnium malorum nequissimus,' 'more perfidious than Judas, more treacherous than Ganelon,' the betrayer of Roland in the Pass of Roncesvalles. He had got the government by forged letters, and hired

mercenaries, and had cheerfully left his hostages at Constantinople to be beheaded when his rebellion was discovered !

Richard was on his way to the Crusade, to besiege Acre, but his fleet had been scattered by a storm. Three ships were wrecked on Cyprus, and the crews plundered and imprisoned, though they had managed to get together and into a tower, where they held out defiantly. Now the big 'bus' (*buza*) that bore the two queens Berengaria of Navarre and Joan of Sicily, betrothed and sister of Richard, put into Limasol harbour, and Isaak was demanding the surrender of both ladies when Richard arrived in person with three ships. These events would have roused a milder person than any Plantagenet, but the 'Monachus Florentinus' who wrote of the taking of Acre, shall tell the tale.

Nam tyrannus insulae, turbo pietatis,  
Tribus ibi navibus regis naufragatis  
Homines recluserat manibus ligatis,  
Equis victualibus armis usurpatis.

Sed a rege reddere cuncta postulatur.  
Negat, pugnat, vincitur, fugit, vinculatur.  
Digna factis ultio digne compensatur,  
Captivator hominum modo captivatur.

Actually, Richard forced a landing with what men he had—need we say that he was himself the first ashore—and then jumping on a 'ricinum vel jumentum,' the first thing on four legs that he saw, he led the attack and routed the forces of Isaak. That hero was soon captured himself, for he had no friend in Cyprus, and only begged 'not to be put in fetters of iron.' Richard agreed to that, and put him in silver chains, an honour which we hope the wearer appreciated. After this, of course, the island was his ; what possible right could the Emperor of Constantinople have over it ? He proceeded to marry Berengaria at once, getting the Archbishop of York to perform the ceremony and crown the lady, as Baldwin of Canterbury was not available, though he was among the Crusaders. It is on this accidental fact, by the way, that the now admitted right of the Archbishop of York to crown the queen consort of England is based. Then the king, being 'gloriosus et hilaris,' as one would expect such a rollicking schoolboy to be under the circumstances, proceeded to commend his rule to the dignitaries of the Cyprian church and state when they came to

congratulate him—by shaving off all their beards, to show them they had a new master!!!

While he was thus enjoying himself, messengers turned up from the Crusading camp at Acre, to say that he was badly needed there, and incidentally to remind him that he was a Crusader, pledged to make no war on Christians till he had fulfilled his vow. 'Good Lord, I forgot,' said Richard, or words to that effect, and promised to come on at once. But meantime what was to be done with Cyprus? Richard tried to give or sell it to the Templars, but they found it too hot to hold. Then Guy of Lusignan, dispossessed king of Jerusalem, turned up from nowhere in particular, and the problem was solved. Here on the one hand was a king without a kingdom, and on the other a kingdom without a king. What could be more obvious? Richard handed over the island at once, on the rule laid down, in after years, by the good knight-errant Don Quixote. 'It is quite usual, Sancho, for knights to make their squires governors of islands that they may happen to conquer in the course of their adventures.' So Guy became a king again, much to the amazement of his brother when he heard it. 'Good Lord, made him a king have they? would they have made me a god then?' Still, in spite of this fraternally frank comment, Guy, 'the pauvre valet' who had failed completely in Jerusalem, reigned all his life in Cyprus and founded a dynasty that lasted three hundred years.

Thus far the Latin historians, telling what is truth as far as it goes; still there was another side to the question, and it is only fair to say how the whole transaction looked to the Greeks. 'Saladin the Atheist,' says one of them, 'took Jerusalem, and the Crusaders could not retake it, for God would not put out the dog to put in the wolf. Then the King of England came with a fleet and Cyprus succoured him like a mother, otherwise he would have perished like Barbarossa. Isaak being a tyrant, the people asked Richard to help them, but he only plundered the land and sold it to the Latins, and great was the wailing and unbearable the stink that arose therefrom. After having thus ruined Cyprus, the King effected nothing against his fellow-beast, Saladin, and so went home again.'

It must be owned that there is an uncomfortable amount of truth in the account thus given!

Thus the Frank kingdom was established in Cyprus, with what appeared to be the natural administration of the country, for

men who had just come from a land where the 'Ordinance of Jerusalem' had held sway till lately. That is to say, Western Feudal administration was put upon the top of the Byzantine government system, nobody thinking for a moment of Richard's promise that the people should have the 'Laws of Manuel only' for their management. It must be owned that the result was marvellously picturesque and romantic, if we can forget the lot of the unlucky Greek Rayah, at whose cost all was done, as thoroughly as did the Westerns who were in power.

All the remnants of the Latin nobility who had lost their fiefs in Palestine, all adventurous youth from everywhere, crowded into Cyprus to make their fortunes, and usually made and spent them! 'Come out here,' writes one lovable scamp from Burgundy, who had left home 'because they had begun to enforce the laws there against men of family,' to a loved younger brother. 'I came out without a penny, and now I have married a rich wife, (all the ladies of Cyprus are beautiful and all kind, and every merchant's daughter has better jewels than the queen of France), and I have fifty couple of white hounds, with a slave to look after every couple.' There was good sport too for the hounds, and for the hunting leopards that were brought in from the east; you hunted 'papyons and carables' on the plains, and mouffon on the hills. What the papyon may be we know not, but the carable appears on some heraldic shields, and seems to have been first cousin to the griffin, quite a beast for a knight-errant to pursue. Also there were wild men in the woods. Here Valentine captured his unknown brother, Orson.

Sire John de Mandeville came out, *en route* for Jerusalem as he tells us, and found, as usual, much of interest in the isle. 'In no land is there better drink, or drinkers,' he assures us, adding for our guidance that the white wine is the best, as it should be, seeing that some of it came from King Solomon's own vineyard, at Engaddi, near Paphos. Also there are diamonds in Cyprus, 'more tender than others, that a man may well polish' (actually the local 'Paphos diamond' is a colourless topaz) and as 'this noble stone is in his nature male and female' you can mate them, and rear a healthy family of diamonds for sale, 'which I know is true for I have oft-times done it myself!'

The most startling information of all, however, is given by a runaway monk, who had been caught and brought back in disgrace to his monastery at Utrecht. A most knowledgeable old abbot



laid this penance on one afflicted with the wanderlust, that he should go on pilgrimage, and keep a journal that his superior was to read on his return! When he came to Cyprus, this monk had experiences. 'There is no doubt whatever that this is *the* island of Aphrodite, for men say that even to sleep upon the soil of it rouses uncontrollable passion, and this is quite true.' He adds the remarkable scientific note that it was entirely peopled by the offspring of Incubi, all lovely to look on, 'for it is not correct to say, even though the author of the *Malleus Maleficarum* asserts it, that the evil demons Incubus and Succuba are always barren!' One hopes that the Abbot kept the journal locked up when he got it! Obviously a delightful island to live in—for the Frank who was on the top. As for the Greek, who cared?

In ecclesiastical matters, the oppression was even more galling. It was not so long since all Christians in the great system of civilisation that men still called the Roman Empire, had all been members of one Catholic Church. The Empire of Islam was outside this world, and all Christians in its borders were 'heretics' and did not count. Though the 'Great Schism' had begun before Richard entered Cyprus, men could still think of Reunion as in practical politics; the crime of the Fourth Crusade was soon to leave a memory of comprehensible hate between all 'Orthodox' and Latins, that has not passed away yet.

That, however, was in the future yet, and the Pope, who had some knowledge of Church history, or at least of Church statesmanship, was very anxious to give acceptable terms both to the Greek Hierarchy and the Greek rite. Perhaps he knew that the one had been auto-cephalous in days when the Papacy had hardly begun to develop, and that the other was at least as ancient and as proper as any Latin liturgy.

Thus his holiness, Alexander IV, was desirous of having the Archbishop of Cyprus recognised as a Patriarch, supreme over at least the Greeks in the island, and subordinate to no local Latin Bishop, but only to the Pope himself. It was the Latin clergy who, hard to hold as the Jesuits in China in a later age, simply refused to carry out the wishes of their superior, and he had no means then of enforcing his commands! Ultimately what was called an agreement was hammered out. There were to be four Latin Bishops in the island, one in each of the old Greek sees, and each was to have a Greek subordinate under him. These unlucky Bishops, who received each a scanty salary, paid by the Latin

out of the ancient endowments of the see, had not only to recognise the Papal supremacy, but also their own inferiority to all Latin Bishops, and to pay a semi-feudal fealty each to his immediate superior. They had to be enthroned by those Latin Bishops, and to attend the synods that they called, and on these terms they were graciously allowed to rule the Greeks on behalf of the Latins, knowing all the while that they were regarded as apostates by their own co-religionists for their pains. Truly it was as aggravating a measure of conciliation as man could well devise. It must be owned that the Latins built—with Greek funds—splendid monuments. In the cathedrals of Nikosia and Famagusta, and in other churches like 'St. Nicholas of the English,' once the sanctuary of the English order of the 'Knights of St. Thomas of Canterbury,' one can see to this day what exists nowhere else—great interiors of the thirteenth century that stand unaltered by later additions of renaissance or other periods, and that show the lines of architecture that the designer intended. It is the fact that they are now mosques that has saved them from incongruous additions, and the result is marvellous.

Wonderful, too, were the men who did the work, even if they were well and naturally hated by the Greeks over whom they ruled. Take such a man as Pierre Thomas, Cardinal Legate in the land, and fighting Archbishop of Nikosia, whenever there was an 'infidel' to fight. His measures to convert the 'schismatics' were such, that an Orthodox mob burst into the cathedral as he celebrated Mass, fully intending to lynch him. The Archbishop—unarmed there at any rate—faced them so fearlessly that they shrank cowed from the building. He fought side by side with the Knights of Rhodes, notably at Alexandria, where he led the landing-party in full armour, mace in one hand and crucifix in the other. Men could at least believe that he quelled a tempest by a word on his return to Cyprus, where he soon after died, either of wounds received at the storming, or of plague contracted when he fearlessly tended the sick at Famagusta. All agree that he died, praying to be laid where sheep and goats, innocent creatures of God, might tread on the dust of a sinful man. We simply lack, in these lesser days, a measuring rod by which to gauge such a man.

The House of Lusignan had no easy throne! Misfortune in war made them tributary to the Sultan of Egypt, and though Genoa and Venice were both willing to help such an outpost against the Crescent, they were bitterly jealous of one another, and open



war followed, in Cyprus, in this wise. In the year 1382, James of Lusignan was crowned 'king of Jerusalem' (a title the house still kept, and later gave to the Hapsburgs), at Famagusta. He was crowned king of Cyprus at Nikosia. A question rose which ambassador, Venice or Genoa, had the right to walk at the right stirrup of the King, in the procession to the banquet that followed the rite. The King deciding for Venice, 'Genoa' threw a loaf at 'Venice,' at the banquet, on which Venice with great promptitude stuck a knife into Genoa, and the Venetians threw all the Genoese out of any windows that were handy! A war followed, that was not finally settled for eighty years.

It was Venice, however, that finally tricked herself into the island! In 1490, the House of Lusignan failed after 300 years of difficult rule, and the last male of it married a Venetian lady, Catharine Cornaro, who was made a daughter of Venice in order to give her royal rank as became the wife of a king. Soon after, the last Lusignan died, as those were apt to do whose deaths were convenient for the signory, and the Republic sent a 'Proveditore' to the island, 'to secure the rights of the widow.' Very soon it was found that no woman could rule there, and poor 'Queen Catharine' was made to execute a 'voluntary' abdication (ten times over in ten cities, that there might be no mistake about it), and Venice annexed the isle. Thus it was that Venetian generals like Othello came to the place, for it seems that he was quite historical, though his name of 'Moro' did refer to his family badge, the Mulberry, and not to his nationality. It is even true that he gave his bride a handkerchief, which plainly had 'magic in the web of it,' for why else should a proper Venetian girl have followed a man who was only her husband to a barbarous land like Cyprus, when she might have stayed in civilised Venice? The poor lady caught fever there, and died on her return journey, for there was no historic Iago in the tale.<sup>1</sup>

A Venice that was past her prime could not hope to hold so distant a point against a dominant Turk, particularly after Sultan Selim the Grim took Egypt in 1517, and therefore could no longer

<sup>1</sup> Naturally, Venice put up St. Mark's Lion in her new possession, and the magnificent specimen at Famagusta near 'Othello's bastion' has somehow become the head-quarters of the local witches! The lion, when made to speak by proper art-magic, will answer all enquiries from his book! Recently, a witch was arrested for practising her black art at the spot, but as the British Government in its wisdom has decided that there is no such thing as witchcraft, she could not be indicted under that head. As, however, the lady had appeared in full witch tenue—that is to say her broomstick and nothing else—she could be, and was imprisoned for 'appearing in public improperly dressed!'

acquiesce in the presence of Christians in Rhodes and Cyprus. Rhodes fell in 1520, but a not too dignified diplomacy held the other island fifty years more. In 1563, Venice ordered the very needful fortification of Nikosia, and the act was enough to give the Turk a pretext for war. Sulieman the Magnificent, then Sultan, broke out in fury at the news; 'Fortify *my* island against me!' he said, claiming that he, as lord of Egypt, had inherited the suzerain rights of the old Mameluke rulers of that land. However, he was too busy on the Danube to take steps, and it was left for his son, Selim 'the sot,' to send a courteously worded ultimatum to Venice. 'My august Master,' said the Vizir to the ambassador, 'has a great fancy for the wine of Cyprus. That being so, would it not be a graceful act on the part of the signory if it were to offer to present him with that barren rock?' Invasion followed the gentle hint, and the capital city, Nikosia, was stormed after a defence that was hardly of the first class. There was a romantic sequel to it, however.

Oddly enough, at least one of the batteries of guns that breached Nikosia was of English make. Henry VIII had presented twenty good pieces of artillery to the Knights of St. John, 'to serve in the recapture of Rhodes,' a gift made shortly before that disagreement with the Pope that made him execute at least one gallant brother of the order. The guns—which had been put in the fort of Tripoli—had passed with it into Turkish hands, and so had served in the siege, after which at least one of them had gone back to its place on a galley which was selected to take the most valuable loot—both treasure and women—to Constantinople. Among the captives was a Greek girl, Maria Syncetike by name, who seems to have made up her mind that, wherever she did go, it should not be to any Turkish harem! She saw her opportunity, and put a match to the magazine of the ship, sending herself and her companions to another world together. Of late years, that gun has been fished up from the sea, and now stands in front of Government House, Nikosia, bearing still the arms of Henry of England, and of the Grand Master of the Knights of St. John, l'Isle Adam. After 350 years, it has come back to its original owners. Can any piece, even in the museum at Woolwich, claim a more romantic history?

If Nikosia fell rather easily, Famagusta gave a different story. Her turn came the next year (1571) and there Bragadino the heroic commandant held out for four months against a tremendous weight of bombardment, and repeated assaults made under cover of a

primitive form of gas attack—the smoke from teglia wood. Three times the Turks fell back from open breaches, where the last of fighting Bishops of the Roman Church shared in the defence and encouraged the defenders. Fortunately for him, he died of wounds before the end of the siege, for the Turkish general Mustafa had sworn to impale him! While all this was going on, the Genoese fleet under Doria hung idle in the offing. The admiral's orders were to relieve Nikosia, not Famagusta, and he did not care to risk ships that were his private property. At last, when his food was gone, his garrison down to 500 men and his powder to three barrels, with all the assaulted length of wall one practicable breach, Bragadino asked for terms. Mustafa gave decent conditions enough—evacuation with the honours of war and safe conduct for the garrison to Venice. Then, however, the sheer brute that is beneath the surface in every Turk came to the light. He invited Bragadino to a complimentary interview and there had him seized and, after various horrible indignities, flayed alive in the great square of Famagusta, between 'the two columns' that were the symbol of Venetian rule. Small wonder that next year, when the news came home, the fleet of the Holy Alliance—with the martyr's two brothers on board—went into action at Lepanto with the cry 'Revenge for Bragadino.'

With the fall of Famagusta, Venetian rule ended, and Cyprus became a Turkish province. There was, of course, some massacring, and much confiscation of lands to provide for the conquerors, while the Latins left the island *en masse*. The glorious Latin cathedrals became mosques, and all churches and monasteries were prizes of war. Actually, those belonging to the Greeks were soon allowed to be redeemed, and the Greeks themselves did not care for the others. As for the native population—numbering about 200,000—they became 'rayahs' on the ordinary terms, glad enough to be rid of their feudal lords and Latin Bishops. 'Better the Turk than the Latin' was still true, to them, in spite of the astonished disgust of Roman writers who could not make out why anybody should 'reject the limpid water of the Latin obedience, and prefer the gangrened limb.' The Orthodox Church, which had for some time been absorbing the Latin one, locally, automatically resumed its old status. It was reconciled, synodically, to the authorities of Constantinople, who had suspected it as 'Latinised' before, and it reclaimed—though it had to defend—its old autocephalous rank.

Of course, under the Turk, oppression began as soon as it was worth while. The island was placed directly under the Vizir, who sent a deputy (Muhassil) in his place, a functionary who bought his office and had to recoup himself and make his fortune. The Orthodox Bishops, as recognised representatives of the 'rayahs' for whom they were responsible, had the right to speak for them, but at some personal risk. Once, in 1764, a deputation who had come to protest against a governor's oppression were all dropped through the floor. At other times, they might make comfortable terms for themselves, at the cost of their flocks, if so disposed; Greeks have but little confidence in their own fellow-countrymen when they are in power, and accused their Bishops of handling the taxes for their own benefit, and of making a profitable monopoly in the sale of corn. Naturally, any suspicion of 'treason' or 'rebellion' would bring about drastic action from the governor, and in the year 1825, during the Greek war of independence, all the notables of the island, including all the Bishops, were massacred together, by way of teaching them what came of sympathising with Greek nationalism.

In 1878 the island, casually and accidentally as always, passed under British rule. The Russo-Turkish War was just over, and our policy then was held to demand the integrity of the Ottoman empire and especially the safety of Constantinople. In defence of that principle we had come near to war with Russia and now, rather irrelevantly, we 'occupied' Cyprus, which was Ottoman territory, for the same end. Exactly how a company of red-coats in Cyprus was going to stop Russian advance in the Balkans and the Caucasus was known, presumably, to our rulers, but certainly to no one else!

British occupation was an immense relief to the peasants of Cyprus, and was welcomed by them accordingly. 'Complaints? How can there be any? Are we not under the British?' was the reply made to the questioner who asked about the point. The Turkish minority of the people at least acquiesced, and the general feeling was shown by an episode that deserved to be recorded. A government official died in Cyprus, and to show their reverence for everything British the Cypriots demanded that he should be buried in a certain jasper sarcophagus of classic date, then in Famagusta. This was duly done, and it was only after the funeral that folk remembered that Cyprian legend called the sarcophagus 'the marriage-bed of Lady Venus,' and recounted how the good

knight Mars brought it from the Caucasus after a battle with the local griffins, choosing jasper because that stone has the property of abating human passion, and Venus was so very ardent! So it is in this couch, in the Protestant cemetery of Famagusta, that this most respectable official now sleeps his last sleep!

Of late years, the feeling has changed. Now we have to do with a generation that does not know Turkish rule, and only knows that, since the annexation of the island in 1914, there is no danger of their being given back to it. Since the war, the feeling of Greek cultural nationality that has always been present and which no man disputes, has become political as it was not before, and expresses itself in the 'Enosis' movement for union with Greece. This is backed by the Bishops of a most national Church, who might perhaps remember, with profit, how others treated and how some still treat other prelates who did the like. They act thus, not as Bishops—for even an excited agitator cannot say that the Orthodox Church has been ill-treated under British rule—but as 'nationals,' and in company with lawyers and newspaper men, take advantage of the privileges Britain has given to intrigue against her. As usual in such cases, the attack has been focused on an official who has shown himself to be the best friend Cyprus has had for some time. Further, the generosity of Great Britain in the past has given them—in the matter of the Ionian Islands—a precedent that they now quote against her. Greeks have many great and most attractive qualities, but one may quote, with profit, a Greek statesman upon his own people. 'Politically, we are like spoiled children; we think that we ought to have whatever we fancy and choose to cry for.' It is not a tendency of which they have the monopoly (life would be much simpler in England if that were the case) and it is one that has brought terrible disaster to the country in more than one recent instance. It cannot be denied that agitation has made the peasants of Cyprus believe for the moment that they really want that political union that agitators have bidden them clamour for. It is now the business of statesmen to determine how far that belief is real, and whether, if it be so, the desire can be granted with justice, both to those who are affected by it, and to the power to whom after all they owe it that they can express the desire now.

That the Cypriot has regarded himself as 'Greek' through the ages, and has endured much for his nationality, admits of no doubt at all.

## THE BIRD OF HEAVEN.

BY WINIFRED F. PECK.

BROTHER HERIWALD rolled over on the stone floor and opened his eyes sleepily. Unnoticed by his three fellow-monks he had secured a little dried grass, as a poor pillow for his plump body. That this was a wile of the Devil was clear from the number of times he woke, to find it humped uncomfortably beneath him.

But was it a wile of the Devil which had awakened him? In the low building of rough rock and stone, built by the brothers themselves, a fire of sea-drift smouldered night and day. Even the Prior could hardly count it an indulgence of the flesh on this icy, sea-bound rock on the north-east coast of Britain, and as Brother Philip would point out, it would take much time and material to kindle it daily. Usually it sank to mere embers as they slept, but to-night someone had kindled them. And no devil's wiles but the grace of Heaven had awakened Brother Heriwald to see that someone.

Yes, he decided, rubbing his eyes, before him was the Vision which the saints in all ages had desired to see. There, by the glowing wood knelt Our Lady herself, her gold hair diamonded with sea-spray, her wet blue cloak drawn round her, her hands stretched to the flames, as if accepting it as the offering of her poor servants, the Brothers, who slept around her.

So it was to him she had appeared, to poor Heriwald, thought the monk, indulging unrestrainedly in the Sin of Pride. In every community of those far-off days was there probably, one simple, ingenuous soul who served as a butt for the others. In the terribly close intimacy of the four servants of God on the Devil's Island, Brother Heriwald's eccentricities served to provoke, now and again, smiles which reminded them of their common humanity, nor did the Brother himself make any protest. Yet more than once he had murmured, as he murmured now more exultantly than ever—'He hath chosen the weak things of the earth.'

In the marvel of the Vision he had closed his eyes. Now he opened them once more to exult in that radiance, and yet next moment they were tightly closed, and he had rolled over, his back



to the fire, muttering incoherent words of exorcism. He had been deceived! Here was no vision of Our Lady! The devils of the island were seeking to bewitch him! For the second glimpse had shown him the Lady occupied busily in wiping her very fair, and very wet, ankles and toes with the blue cloak.

Truly this was a place of devils! So men had said when first St. Cuthbert himself dared to cross hither in a coracle from the House of Lindisfarne and make himself a hermitage.

Witches and warlocks might disappear before the Saint: Heriwald and his brothers might keep them at bay in the day-time. But at night, through his own weakness of the flesh, one had made its way hither. Might he not indeed have been forewarned of such a danger? For all day before the island had been haunted by strange visitors. In their five years of Prayer, and of endless work to scrape together the means of bare livelihood on this barren shore, the Brothers had not failed to notice how, early every spring, the guillemots paid a flying visit to their rocks. Not until July would they come to nest, but then, as now, they fell upon the island like a storm of softest snow and vanished again. It was, said the Prior, a much-travelled man, upon the day dedicated in Rome to St. Valentine, that they came, a day when in that distant world of sunshine and vineyards and gleaming palaces, young men and maidens exchanged vows of love. Had not one of these birds taken the form of a fair maiden, at the instigation of Satan himself, to remind the Brothers of those wicked smiles and gestures of love in spring-time which they had cast behind them for ever? Brother Heriwald groaned and began to whisper to himself the seven penitential Psalms.

At the De Profundis his curiosity got the better of him. He looked round again and saw a strange sight. The witch-maiden had dried her wings, apparently, and was curious of her company. On her pink toes she crept from one sleeping form to another, gazing at them curiously. (And how earnestly Brother Heriwald closed his eyes!) Then—Oh! hideous impertinence of the powers of darkness!—she smiled a naughty smile, put out her pink tongue as if in derision and curled herself up by the fire to sleep. She had no godly fear of the sin of self-indulgence! She dragged fodder recklessly from the niche where it lay drying for the Brethren's solitary and antique goat, and curled herself on it by the fire.

Should Brother Heriwald wake his three brethren? Suppose they saw nothing he was clearly possessed of the devil! If they

saw the poor, pretty witch they might disturb her! While Christianity and humanity fought in the poor befuddled mind, Brother Heriwald's eyelids drooped, his fat innocent face grew peaceful and he fell asleep.

By the hour of Mass next morning everyone of the Brothers was aware that some strange feeling excited Brother Heriwald. He awoke, shuddering and staring: round and round the cell which served them for dormitory, kitchen, refectory and chapter-room alike, he wandered, peering into every corner and gaping. A curtain of thick hides, the gift of the faithful on Lindisfarne, divided this room from the tiny chapel. Here, at Mattins and Prime, knelt the poor man, his face twitching, his eyes rolling nervously. Brother Philip, the spare, harsh, little man who guarded the scanty stores and domestic affairs of the island, watched him narrowly. He had inherited from some forgotten Eastern ancestor, who had bartered and trafficked with Romans on the Great Wall two centuries ago, a great thrift and quick intuitions. More than once Brother Heriwald had been detected in petty theft from the sparse store of pulse, and taking to himself too large a share of the stew: had he been up to his tricks again? Brother Conran, young, bronzed, keen-eyed, feared that the old man was failing at last. It was Conran who did the hard manual labour of the island, and, in the intervals, drew and illuminated so cunningly the copy of the Gospel of St. John, made in the previous century, at Lindisfarne. He could work metals and carve also. It was he who, from a log of wood, had devised and decorated the fair Virgin, a little stumpy and very red-cheeked, over the Altar. God had called this young chieftain, so the brothers knew, from a wild tribe of Gaels who haunted the hills and swept the harp by night in the far-away Western Isles. The aged Prior frowned frequently, the frown of the fanatic at any interruption. On Lindisfarne he had been famed for his preaching, and his power of converting the stout Saxon settlers on the Northern coast: to escape the sin of Pride he had asked leave to bring the party hither, where no man lived, and a monk might well feel that only in prayer to Heaven could he be of any avail. Would that Brother Heriwald could better control his foolish nerves and body!

The wish was granted. At the confiteor Brother Heriwald gave a sudden chuckle of content and knelt in peace and silence. At the same moment a scent had crept to his greedy nose and an idea to his bewildered brain. The scent was that most excellent one of



roasting fish from the other room : someone was busy there at a corporeal work of mercy and it could be no other than last night's visitant. She was no witch to appear and disappear with morning. She was some voyager, cast from her vessel into the sea last night and thrown up on their coast. 'Gloria tibi, Domine' chanted Father Heriwald, his mind at ease.

Everyone knows the story of Little Goldilocks and the Bears in the wood. Surely it was enacted this day on the island when the four men, long-haired, bearded, muffled in brown cloaks, shuffled into their living-room again. For here before them was an unknown maiden, small and plump, gold-haired and pink-cheeked, her big eyes staring at them (and those eyes, noted Brother Heriwald with a twinge of returning uneasiness, opened as widely and glanced about as brightly and quickly as those of a bird !). Only this goldilocks did not run away. To the rough log which served as table she had drawn up their four little wooden stools. Kneeling, she raised from the fire four portions of most excellent fish, caught quite clearly, by her skill that morning.

'Quis quousque?' began the Prior, but with maternal gestures she urged them to eat before they questioned. And was it not, perhaps, an evil omen, that every one of them obeyed her? With one gay smile of amusement at their chanted grace she took her own portion by the hearth.

'She has been thrown ashore by some wreck?' suggested Brother Heriwald quickly. Suppose the Prior ordered them to beware of the witch and her enchanted food!

'So it would appear,' said the Prior. He had not seen the vision overnight! 'When we have eaten we will question her, save indeed that the fare is too tempting for our Lenten fast.'

'It is the Feast Day of St. Valentine of which you told us,' smiled Brother Conran. His eyes had grown gay, his youth more apparent, since the vision had come before his eyes. 'The guillemots are on the island!'

'It is ever wrong to waste good food,' said Brother Philip.

Then followed, when that wonderful meal was over, two plays in pantomime, the one a success, the other not. Most cleverly did the stranger enact to them a scene of storm, a ship in peril on the rocks—the ship was Brother Conran's stool: she waved her arms as one who swam in imaginary waves: she lay on the floor as one buffeted, spent, upon their rocks. That she had been voyaging on a ship of those Vikings, whose terrors lived but as yet in persistent

rumours on those coasts, was clear ; that she was a Princess among them might be surmised from her untroubled air of authority and the poise of her golden head ; that her name was Tärna they gathered, as she repeated it, smiling and pointing towards herself. But when the Brothers, in their turn, led her into their Chapel, and tried by word and gesture, to show her how holy was this place, in honour of their God, her shrugs and smiles made it clear that she knew nothing of, and cared nothing for, such goings on. The carved Virgin and Crucifix, the holy vessels and candlesticks and woven hangings—from these she turned with a gay little song, and ran through the door of the cell into the open air.

And that, indeed, was her element, on this morning, blessed by the calm which can so rapidly succeed a northern gale, and by that prophetic, glamorous, promise of spring offered so often by gracious February to be withdrawn by the scowls of March and April. The hovel of the monks, reflected Brother Conran, was a grave of forgotten prayers, mouldering incense, unkempt stuffiness and savours of damp earth. Here the white crests of the waves on the dark rocks shone like souls strayed from Purgatory to Paradise ; here the blue sky enshrouded the world like Our Lady's cloak ; far away on the mainland the Castle of Bebbá shone like the Heavenly City with its walls of gold. Were not the guillemots, fluttering and preening themselves on the rocks to which they pay so strange and flying a visit every spring, like cherubim and seraphim loosed from the gates of pearl ?

‘ We must bring this wanderer to the grace of Christ,’ said the Prior, the gleam of the harvester of souls in his eyes. ‘ God have mercy on all the heathen souls which must have fared to Hell last night ! ’

‘ We have little food for another mouth,’ said Brother Philip.

‘ God will provide,’ said Brother Heriwald, licking his lips unctuously. He could taste that fish still !

Tärna's keen eyes had strayed from the Brothers. Suddenly she pointed to the sea and cried aloud in glee. Had this Bird Maiden no heart, wondered Brother Heriwald, a chill touch of the unknown and eerie at his own, as he followed her pointing finger. The tide was low now, and out of the sea many rocks raised their cruel heads, like hungry monsters, from the waters where they had sucked strange food in the night. On a reef some hundreds of yards away was caught the stern of a strange ship, vast to these men's eyes ; on the rocks below that battered wreck, hung there till

the next tide should buffet it to pieces, were strewn logs and pieces of woven stuff, jettison from the Viking ship which had ventured so rashly near the devil's rocks. Had the maiden no heart that she clapped her hands so gaily at these relics of her drowned comrades, and why was she running so lightly down to their own coracle, beached high on the slippery rocks which formed here a tiny bay, an insecure landing place for the Brothers ?

'She goes to fetch what she can from the wreck. I must go with her to protect her,' cried Brother Conran.

It was useless for the Prior to forbid him. The squawking of the guillemots in the sunshine drowned every sound on the island. In but a moment the two were together in the coracle upon the waves. Son and daughter of sea-races they laughed as they bent to the oars on those seas where, even in calm weather, currents and cross-currents threaten every mariner. To the three older Brothers left behind, it seemed that they ventured out to certain death, now, in these winter days when no sane man took to the water.

'Heaven have mercy on their souls,' groaned the Prior.

'Heaven help us if our coracle should be lost !' frowned Brother Philip.

'Poor child ! And so good a cook to perish ! And our poor young brother !' cried Brother Heriwald, tears coursing down his grimy cheeks.

It was the hour for Terce and for Meditation, and, bound by their Rule, the brothers returned most unwillingly to their dwelling.

'Frail old men, what can we do but pray ?' said the Prior, but Brother Heriwald felt himself by no means frail and helpless yet. Prayers at an end, he flung himself upon the household duties which were his care in the community, but he swept over the floor with a broom of twigs, and prepared a most unsavoury mess of vegetable roots in the big pot, rebellion in his heart. At the first possible excuse he ran out of doors, tears gathering in his eyes as he sought for the coracle, for a moment in vain.

But no tears were there when some minutes later, the elder Brothers came out to join him, pity and curiosity driving out repentance and meditation from their hearts. For what indeed could the Prior feel but penitence for the failings of his little community, Brother Philip so intent on worldly considerations, Brother Heriwald so absurd and ill-balanced, Brother Conran so impulsive and self-willed ? But all that was forgotten as he looked down to

the jetty of rocks and out to sea. From the rocks the coracle was returning, rowed by the visitor and Brother Conran, weighed down by planks of the ship and spoil of the sea; behind it, at the end of a rope, mazed and resentful, swam a little cow. On the rocks stood Brother Heriwald, at his feet a store of yet more planks and dripping stuffs, spoil evidently from a former excursion of the boat. And in his arms he held a tiny calf, first passenger evidently from the bulwarks of the galley on its cleft rock, for whose sake, clearly, the mother cow was swimming the seas so valiantly now.

'Behold the gifts of Heaven!' he cried, lifting up the calf as a proud mother would hold her baby. 'Often have I heard that the heathen travelled with their oxen and asses and all that was theirs, but never did I dream of such spoil from a wreck! We shall have milk, yea, and butter. Behold!' He waved towards Tärna with no thought of his irreverence, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord!'

The wind was rising, the rain beginning to fall as the coracle drew in. The spell of spring was flying before the biting cold of a north wind, but Tärna and Conran were laughing, their cheeks glowing. Sadly the Prior shook his head at their worldly levity, but he with the rest had to set to work to clear the rocks, much confused by the domestic reunion of the new live-stock, and by planks and heaps of stuffs, before the tide came in.

'Shall we lodge the cow in the Saint's hermitage?' called Brother Conran, panting beneath his load.

Now when St. Cuthbert had first left the world to seek peace alone on the Devil's Island, he had made for himself a tiny cell of rocks and stones, scarce five feet high and four feet wide, where he might serve God in prayer. In these later, more luxurious days it stood empty, and but that morning the Prior had announced that here Tärna might sleep till they settled on her future. Yet here were she and Brother Conran thrusting in the cow and calf, rubbing them down vigorously and spreading dried grass plenteously on the floor. Brother Heriwald gazed dubiously at the Prior as the maiden entered the monk's low house, dragging two great sea-cloaks of purple and scarlet after her. Already a sea-log was drying on the blazing fire: would not the blue and green flames, which danced so eerily on the smoke-blackened roof, bring back to Tärna memories of her own kinsfolk over the far sea whence that good plank had borne her, and wake her to some question about her future? But no, they had no message for the girl. Into the

chapel she made her way, followed by the wide-eyed monks. At the foot of the crude, awkward wooden Virgin she flung a little heap of trinkets, amber-beads, silver clasps and wide bracelets, washed upon the rocks by the capricious waves. Not in reverence, but rather with the good-humoured courtesy due from one princess to another did she offer them, and then, turning, fetched the cloaks, woven, doubtless, by some fair-haired Viking mother on winter evenings by the fireside above the frozen fjords. Here, as she denoted clearly, here and nowhere else would she sleep, in this warm, strangely scented room, under the protection of her strangely featured and gay-coloured friend.

'Who dare say her nay?' asked Brother Conran fiercely.

'The Maid calls on the Holy Maid for help,' pleaded old Heriwald.

'So shall we not require to burn two fires,' considered Brother Philip.

But the Prior needed no softening now. That offering to Our Lady had touched his heart. Not in vain had been his teaching this morning!

'She that cometh to Her shall not be cast out,' he proclaimed.

'Oh, great and mysterious dispensation of Providence,' considered the Prior often in the weeks which followed, 'that God hath given to women not only foolish earthly beauty, which does but tempt men's eyes and lure them to their undoing, and is of its nature an offence to holy men, but also such good sense and docile habits that they may become, with fit instruction, due handmaids and servants of the Church!' And oh, we may add, blind and foolish Prior! Little did he understand that in this strange guest was that charm, even more potent than her beauty, for the undoing of men's hearts! It is noticeable indeed that no clear account of Beauty has come down to us through the ages. We only know that Helen of Troy had white arms, Guinevere golden hair, and Mary of Scotland bright eyes. But in all the dazed accounts of their undying charm we can read that they had this one thing in common, the gift of being all things to all men. That charm had Tärna, a gift not accompanied, perhaps, by much depth of heart, but for that very reason the more compelling. The girl made herself a new home at once: just as the bird, her namesake, scratches itself a narrow nest in rocky sand, so she settled into the low stone dwelling. Had she wept often, or sat gazing longingly across the seas, the monks might have realised more easily what

havoc the rings of her hair and the quick, bird-like glances of her round eyes in her plump face, were working in one heart. But that they could profess to forget in the radiant good-fellowship she showed, in her adaptation to the needs of each Brother. The Prior found her a lovely and reverent convert. She sat in chapel, demure and attentive, picking up phrases whose inapt repetition convulsed Heriwald in laughter, and the Prior in anger at his laughter. 'Sursum Corda!' she would call when a meal was ready; 'Gloria in excelsis' when the milk began to churn—'Non sum digna' when she was offered a choice morsel. This language from Holy Mass was so beautiful in her voice to his ears that the good man never guessed how many cosy naps she had in Chapel, awaking in good time, a dewy-eyed, flushed and model convert.

Brother Heriwald found in her a comrade to laugh with him as well as at him: she tolerated his clumsiness: she mocked him lovingly: she mothered him by keeping for him the best helpings, and muttering mystic runes over his chilblains. Brother Philip found in her a spirit as neat and economical as his own. She kept the poor hovel cleaned; she made succulent dishes of mere trifles; when March came she dug plots of ground for humble vegetables. And as for Brother Conran, it is enough to say that he had all the Gael's genius for self-deception. When Tärna gazed in admiration at his painting and carving he told himself that her beauty was as nothing compared with her artistic sense. When day by day she shared the hardest tasks of chopping wood, dragging up and setting nets for fish, digging and repairing the wattled roof, he would tell himself that he loved her only as a man loves a merry companion, or a pretty wayward child. When the heavy curtain was drawn across the Chapel and she was left to her couch of skins beneath the Altar at night, every one of the Brothers told himself that he had in his charge the daughter of Our Lady, and thought of her with feelings of pure love and veneration. Well indeed might the Prior say: 'Oh great and inscrutable dispensation of Providence!'

## II.

Other guests came to the island all through the early spring and summer, but these were visitors who came of their own free will. The Brothers were prepared for their arrival and their coming made no difference to the even tenor of monastic routine.

To-day they come still. All through the winter the island of



the Saint stands deserted save for a tower and chapel where the light of the Faith burns no longer, and a lighthouse which still warns travellers of the devil's rocks. In April the birds begin to come, and by June the bare rocks are transformed into a miniature watering-place, a bird Lido of flashing forms and purposeful cries. For there are the puffins, exploring the rabbit warrens for their young: there the black comorants huddle on their rocks like gaunt spinsters and matrons in economical lodgings: there the proud guillemots crowd together on the seats they chose on St. Valentine's Day for their nurseries. From their rocks the terns soar and dip into the water, gayest of beach-lovers. The kittiwakes form a select group; the trustful eiders dabble about the coasts, and the gulls, those inveterate tourists, find a home. And if all our ugly earth noises are absent, the air is alive with the squawks and cries of the tireless guests. Only the parallel breaks down as one considers the purposeless idling of seaside tourists: the birds, intent and occupied in producing and rearing their families, put human beings to shame.

The Brothers of the Farnes had always delighted freely in the birds, for did not history tell how St. Cuthbert himself had loved and blessed them. Had he not let them settle on his first hardly won crop of barley, and rob him of a year's food? (That story had always shocked Brother Philip, who insisted that the Brothers should play the part of scarecrows on his patch, day by day.) The Prior loved to hear the birds circling and crying over the Chapel at Mass, as if they sought to share his worship: Brother Heriwald loved to laugh at their antics. In other years Brother Conran had often been found regarding the birds sadly, as if to question them whether they had hovered but a few days since over his own beloved island. But this year he shared only in Tärna's joy at the sight of the visitants, and learnt her lore in the strange tongue, part Latin, part Danish, part Gaelic, which they employed between themselves.

'And my birds have come to-day!' she cried joyfully one morning in June, when he found her, rosy and shining in the pale light of summer sunrise, lying on her face looking over the black rocks and pinnacles and white-crested waves below. It seemed to him, by her side in the fragrance of the thyme, as he watched a new group of terns flutter and dive elegantly into the water, that the Heavens were opened and that this was the dawn of Paradise.

'Your birds?' he asked.

'Yes, Tärna, that is the tern. These come from the far Arctic North: they are my brothers and sisters!' (And it was, perhaps well that Brother Heriwald did not hear that jest.)

But there was another sign from the outer world that morning which awoke more complex feeling in every heart.

'The beacon is burning on Lindisfarne,' said Brother Philip.

'To-day!' said Brother Conran. 'I should fear that mists would rise before evening!'

'And which signal is that?' asked Brother Heriwald. Never could he remember, from one year to another, that one beacon meant that the Abbot of Lindisfarne would visit his brethren, and two that they should set out in their boat for the Abbey.

'The Abbot comes hither,' said Brother Philip tolerantly. 'Let us hope he will bring a sack of corn with him: our meal is nearly exhausted and it is two months to our barley harvest. What can we give him, Tärna?'

'Fish and good butter and those flat barley cakes you like,' smiled Tärna. 'Is that enough for this guest?'

Brother Philip's eyes met the Prior's. How would the saintly Abbot approve of such good cheer? Had they become overworldly and luxurious?

'And what shall we do with Tärna when he is here?' asked Brother Heriwald with his usual tactlessness.

'She will wait upon the Abbot and he will hear her story,' said the Prior severely.

Tärna set to work delightedly. No scruples as to her presence troubled her, nor could she, the woman and home-maker of all time, imagine that a modest entertainment might best fit a holy guest. The Monks were turned out before the last Amen of Mass was over, and she set to work on the floor with her broom. The fire burnt up so bravely that Brother Philip shook his head. A feast was preparing by the fire long before the coracle was seen to leave Lindisfarne, and Brother Heriwald sniffed at the appetising smell. Most gratifying of all to the Prior was the zeal with which she plucked that yellow little flower which grew, and to-day will grow, only on this island, and covered the Altar with its blossoms. Here was a proof that he had been busy in his work of conversion! And if any proof were needed that she was above all other women, she was found eating her share of food quickly just before the

coracle came into the jetty, to escape from them with a smile as they set off to meet the Abbot.

'I go to catch the birds,' she said, waving her hand.

'Now is that not convenient indeed?' cried Brother Heriwald foolishly. Never could he realise that some thoughts are better left unsaid.

There was no need to fear that the Abbot would notice their too luxurious ways, it seemed. A dark cloud of care sat on his wrinkled, yellow brow, and as they ate he poured out his woes to them.

'Dark days are upon us all!' he said. 'For so long have we heard of those most cruel and bitter enemies, the Danish pirates, and for so long has God protected us that we have cried "Peace!" when there was no peace. My brothers, yesterday, far out to sea one of their galleys was sighted from our farthest point! I have come to bid you watch and be ready, though what indeed can you or any of us, men of God, do but abide the judgment of Heaven? Yet in this danger my heart turned to you that I might come, whatever the risks, to hear your confessions.'

When good St. Cuthbert had been persuaded to leave the island he loved for the Bishop's throne he set at naught, only for a little while had hermits been found to follow him. Since the death of the Father Ethelwald, a hallowed Saint, his island was kept by such a small community as now dwelt here. It was the practice of the Abbot to come at intervals to hear the Brothers confess, lest too intimate revelations of one soul to another on the island might cause scandal. To-day, in the face of the awful peril before them, with the necessity of laying bare to the Abbot the late change in their fortunes, each Brother's visit to the chapel, alone, by turn was long and solemn. The sun was sinking in the sky, noted the Prior by the shadows on the smoke-blackened roof, when at last they all reassembled together.

'My Brethren,' said the Abbot, solemnly and dubiously, 'lead me now to see this godly maiden who has, you say, brought comfort to your lives and turned from the power of Satan to Christ. I pray Heaven there is in this no scandal; I could wish to have been consulted earlier. We must trust it was by God's will she was cast up here, and that you did well in accepting her to your service and subduing her to your discipline.'

The Prior's frown checked the sudden irrepressible smile on Brother Heriwald's face. Yet not one of the Brothers but felt

that here was no very life-like picture of the wayward coaxing Tärna! Before the Prior could speak there came an interruption. The two lay-brothers, hardy Northumbrians, who had rowed the Abbot, with many secret misgivings, to the Devil's Island, stood in the doorway.

'The mists are rising!' cried one, with a stricken face. 'We must return at once, without delay.'

The five monks emerged from the narrow doorway and saw before them, indeed, a changed world. The sun was still shining, but Lindisfarne out to sea, and Bebba's Castle on the mainland, had disappeared from view, in a pearly fleece of mist. Borne by gentle winds from the north the little arctic terns had fluttered hither; now on its wings the white fog crept up in its insidious battle against the sun. The earth and sea swam in the dim, shifting radiance of a poet's dream, but it was no poet, but practical men who looked out on the world.

'You cannot return to-day,' said the weather-wise Conran. 'The fogs would be down before you could guide your way home. Pray Heaven the enemy are turning home to shun it!'

'Better go now, at once,' said the other lay-brother, with chattering teeth. 'There are things—there is a thing—upon the island which should not be here! Better leave, whatever the danger! Look! Look!'

At the terror in his voice the Brothers turned sharply. Did some basking seal or silly gull terrify the fellows? And then before them they saw their Tärna, and the Abbot gazed upon the godly convert of their tales. Tärna knew nothing of them, for as they gazed, she flung aside her blue cloak and in her white shift darted into the waves. She was laughing and whistling and calling to the birds, her hands held out to them—with food, alas! suspected Brother Philip—and they were answering her call. A great white seal regarded her motionless; the eider clustered to her with round bright eyes so like her own. A white gull perched on her arm, a little tern circled round her golden hair. She was one with the wild beauty of the sea, with this shimmering world of tumbling waves and waving wings and fluttering feathers. And the music of her voice mingled with the cry of the birds and the ripple of the waters.

The Abbot stared and crossed himself.

'Let us go! Let us go!' whimpered one of the oarsmen.

'No, she is calling the fogs up with her whistle!' screamed the other.

'Show these simple souls a lodging for the night,' said the Abbot sternly. 'I must abide the night, to set this unhappy house in order.'

Brother Philip led the oarsmen to the cowshed and followed his brothers afterwards: five dark, solemn figures, like the grim basalt of the rocks, shrouded by the mists rising at sea. Not a word was spoken till they stood beside the smouldering embers in the darkening cell.

'So now I understand! God sleeps!' The Abbot spoke so loudly that the cell re-echoed. 'God sleeps who once woke for you! You have been betrayed and bewitched. You have fallen into mortal sin.'

Suddenly he broke off, and in his full deep voice he began to chant the hymn of St. Patrick himself, that song which shows us still the valiant, flickering candle of Christianity in the dark Pagan world:

'... Against all Satan's spells and wiles;  
Against the heart's idolatry;  
Against the wizard's evil craft:  
Against the death-wound and the burning:  
The choking wave, the poisoned shaft,  
Protect me, Christ, till thy returning.'

'Do you not understand, misguided men, that you have entertained no wanderer from the sea, but an evil spirit of the Devil? Do you not know that it is in the birds that Satan often finds his ministers? With the birds she came, called even by their name, in the winter! From amongst them she was chosen to take human form and lure you to carnal sin. When I saw your shores gay with birds and ducks, when I saw your hearts and your hearth full of cheer I could not understand, my soul grew sorrowful. You told me of a godly convert: with my own eyes I saw a witch-maiden, making merry with her sister birds.'

'But——' began the Prior.

'Not a word!' said the Abbot. 'Wait here in silence. I will do what must be done. On your obedience, not a word!'

In the cell reigned a silence unbroken save by the squawks of the birds and the dull murmur of the sea, as the mists crept into the room and damped the glowing embers. And in that silence

woke that sudden intolerable hatred of man for brother man which is the inevitable revenge of life on those who fly from it into narrow communities. For each awkward trick of the other, for the Prior's blinking eyes, Brother Philip's sucking lips, Brother Heriwald's grimaces fierce loathing reigned. And most of all it centred perhaps on Conran the Gael who sat there, young, strong, with glowing eyes and raised head, in that assembly of men who saw life as a downward path to the grave. In each soul in the room raged the war between devil and angels when, at last, the door opened. A white hand pushed it, slowly and carefully, in the way they knew so well, and then Tärna herself flung it open, suddenly smiling at them, confident of her welcome. Her gold hair and blue cloak were diamonded with spray, as on the day she came, her eyes sparkling, and in her arms she nursed carefully a white gull with broken wing.

'Exorciso te.' With bitter vehemence the Abbot was on his feet, pointing at her. 'Witch, depart—in the Name——'

Tärna turned from one to the other, staring wide-eyed. What was the matter with the stranger? Did he mean to frighten her? asked her bird-like questioning eyes.

'Depart, evil spirit, into the outer darkness!' hissed the Abbot, pointing at the door.

It was impossible to misunderstand his meaning now. Very softly and unconcernedly, still with a little smile upon her lips, she went out, her wounded bird in her arms.

There was a long silence in the room and then, at a nod from the Abbot, the Prior began to chant the last office of the church. At the accustomed ritual, the accustomed words, the dazed Brothers began to collect themselves. Mechanically yet punctually they rose and knelt in prayer. Only Brother Heriwald could feel burning, like a flame by his side, the anger and impatience of the Gael.

'To-morrow!' said the Abbot, as one pronouncing his decree at last, when the last chant died away, 'to-morrow we leave this accursed island, everyone of us. It is no place save for a Saint!'

'You leave her here alone?' broke in Brother Conran.

'No, not alone! With the witches and warlocks of the rocks for company, with the Devil himself to care for her!'

'What if the enemy from the seas should land and seize her?'

'The story you bade me believe,' said the Abbot coldly, 'was that she was a Princess of this foul Viking race. Very well then, they would take her back to themselves—if that were true!'



'Nay, she told me,' said Conran, 'she is a Princess seized by their warriors and dragged forth to drown at sea.' ('So that was why she had no tears for them,' thought the conscience-stricken Heriwald.) 'Would you leave her here, when their galleys are raking the seas? Shall we all fly to safety, to Lindisfarne and the main land, and leave her here to be a sacrifice to them?'

'She remains here,' repeated the Abbot in the voice of a master.

'Then I remain with her!' cried Brother Conran. As he spoke he darted to the doorway lest any should hold him, and there he stood, white, shadowy and menacing in the mists. 'Listen! You say that she and the birds she loves are the ministers of Satan, and that we, mewed up in this foul cage, are the servants of God. It is you who are wronged, you who are bewitched! Tärna has opened my eyes. She has shown me the sweet loves and cares of birds, how husband guards his wife, how mother guards her young, by what sweet instincts they find and keep their homes. Can it please the God who made such lovely and loving things that we should languish here, crying chants as empty as their cries, without ever a home or a mate, or a battle for those we love? I have learnt my lesson from the birds. I go to serve the God who made them, not your God of dim churches and lonely lives. Where Tärna, my bright Bird goes, I go too.'

And then, before one of them could speak, he had disappeared into the mist.

The Abbot and the Brothers followed him. It seemed but an inevitable part of the horrors of that night that the oarsmen should creep out from the shed, whimpering that they heard sounds as of a ship far out to sea drawing ever nearer to them. Let the enemy come or go, all that mattered was to find Brother Conran and free him from his enchantment, nor was it less the unavowed hope of three of them to see that their Tärna, bird, maid or devil, found shelter from the sea-fog and the foes. On their poor, sandalled feet they stumbled up and down, over slippery rocks by the edge of the moaning waves, over the bare hillside, falling on stones and staggering into the little brackish pools, on the very edge of the cliffs from which a fall would mean instant death. Up and down they went, and as they went the 'Kee-Wit, Kee-Wit,' 'Greër, Greër,' and last cry of the closely nested guillemots mocked them. And yet no sign of Tärna or Brother Conran had they lit upon in the fog when twilight and mist faded into one indistinct

curtain between them and the sea. Only by chance did they all meet together on the small hill above their dwelling. And at their feet were growing the little yellow flowers Tärna had gathered for Our Lady and above them the gulls she loved were still crying and calling.

'God give us light!' groaned the Abbot.

A miracle happened: his prayer was answered. That little wind which had borne the sea mists from the North, came playing on their tail and every now and then broke through its playing, and the monks saw before them the rocks and the open sea beyond.

It is a strange thing that man can reproduce Nature better in her wild and strange than in her ordinary moods. No picture nor painted scenery can reproduce a wide expanse of sunlit sea or daydawn on the hills. But it was as in the drop scene of a theatre that the rift in the mist portrayed the scene to the monks. Each ripple of the surge and swell on the rocks lay white and precise across the dark waves; like a veil of grey the skies met the sea. And on the waters, clear and distinct as if carved from cardboard, lay a great ship. A carved, scaly dragon held up her prow: her scarlet sail hung motionless: at long rows of great oars big men sat motionless, waiting for a command: on her sides shone faintly great shields of metal, like monstrous, dew-dimmed leaves: on the deck a man stood, shading his eyes, turning this way and that, as if seeking for the rocks on which they could hear the breaking of the waves. Beside him stood a great armed king or knight, with a winged helmet and a giant sword. It was this vivid picture, set in a frame of dark seas and darkening mists, which confronted the monks, a missal illuminated and but too easy to understand. Here were the foe: here they sought a channel and a landing-place: here was death awaiting the Brethren, staged superbly and inevitably.

'In manus tuas, Domine!' whispered the Abbot, haggard and voiceless.

But Brother Heriwald seized his arm and cried incoherently. The tableau was not over: it was actionless no longer. From the rocks below a coracle made its way with steady strokes towards the galley. Within it, their backs bent at the oars, sat Tärna and Conran, straining every muscle. And as, from their lower angle of the water, they first saw the ship for which they had, it would appear, been making blindly, Tärna rested her oar for one

moment, and looked round at her lover—ah, yes, he seemed that now without disguise! On her lips they saw for the last time her gay, unconcerned, little smile: her bird eyes reflected the triumph of love which surely shone in his. And then, as if on wings, the coracle sped on its way.

The man at watch on the galley saw her and pointed to her; the winged chieftain shouted and raised his great sword. And then, even as the coracle boarded the side of the giant ship, like a tiny tern in the wake of some great cormorant, all the birds of the island, it seemed, woke at the chieftain's cry. Between the monks and the end of that fateful, fearful meeting, rose a whirlwind of shimmering wings and feathers, squawks and cries. And even as the monks beat off this strange living snowfall, the mists closed, and the dark curtain fell, never to rise again, on the end of the story.

In the small chapel all night whispered Litanies and Prayers rose to Heaven. On the Altar, it seemed to Brother Heriwald, lay not only their future but the fair fame of Tärna and her lover. If, at any moment, the island rang with the grating of the galley on the rocks; if in a few minutes they were helpless beneath the awful swords and shields of the dread strangers, they would die knowing that Tärna had betrayed them, that she was indeed a witch who had brought her curse upon them. But if the Danes turned and sailed away, leaving the island safe still and still the home of saints, must not the Abbot himself recognise that Tärna had saved them, that she had kept their existence secret from the foe, perhaps, even at the expense of her life and Conran's? And kneeling there, as hour passed hour and no sound, not even the cry of the roosting birds broke the stillness of the night, triumph grew in that simple soul. When the grey dawn broke at last and through the narrow window they peered, to see the mists rolled away, and the sea still, grey and empty, a grey void beneath a grey dome, the Abbot prepared for Mass with trembling fingers.

'Let us thank God for our escape,' he said, 'and let us praise Him for the high and noble sacrifice of his servants, Conran and Tärna!'

Well, well, reflected Brother Heriwald, sniffing uncontrollably, did it matter much whether it was to life beyond the seas, or to death, that their sea-bird and her lover had taken flight? For here before the altar, on the prayers of the monks, her soul was winging its way to Heaven.

## III.

Brother Heriwald lived to a great old age on Lindisfarne, though he died before the Danes at last descended on the Abbey in the year 743. Of that strange night on the Devil's Island he told three stories which varied considerably.

The first he would produce with many sighs and grotesque shakings of the head, when the Brothers were boasting of their experiences in the Cloister, and recounting the troubles of the Blessed St. Anthony. Then he would tell how once God sent a devil to haunt him also, Brother Heriwald, in the form of a great white bird, but that, by nights of prayer and fasting, he exorcised the demon.

Many years later, when it was a matter of wonder to all the world that the rich monastery of Lindisfarne was as yet untroubled by the attacks of the Danes, Brother Heriwald would grow mysterious and confidential, and tell how, years ago, he and his brethren had saved from the perils of the deep a great Princess of the Danes, and how she had wedded a high Prince of the Gaels who was living upon the island with their community. These two, he said, had sworn together by God when they sailed away to their Northern kingdom in the Arctic Lights that no warrior nor galley of theirs should ever harm the holy Abbot and monks of Lindisfarne.

But when he was very old indeed, he would gather together any children he could find on the shores of the Holy Island, and talk to them unceasingly of the beauty and goodness of the birds. They are, he would say, the messengers of God to this earth, to remind us of the angels. 'And one of them in very truth,' he would tell them, his old, foolish, saintly face lit up with smiles, 'one of them I saw indeed take wing and fly right upwards to the Throne of God.'

## *THE STORY OF THE KOH-I-NUR.*

BY COLONEL P. T. ETHERTON.

WHEN kings first appeared on the earth they adopted various emblems of royalty ; they wore a crown as the hall-mark of sovereignty, the seats they occupied were embellished and glorified into thrones, and the rings and ornaments displayed were evidence of kingly might. In olden days kings fought in their crowns, and are we not told Saul fought his last fight wearing the regal emblem, whilst the chief prize that King David won in battle with the king of the Amorites was the crown of the latter made of pure gold and encrusted with precious stones ?

The British monarchy can claim to be the oldest in Europe and its state jewels and emblems of royalty are beyond price, if only from their historical value. Edward the Confessor, who died in 1066, boasted a magnificent sapphire which King George V now carries in his own crown.

To pass from the sapphire of the Confessor to the other precious stones in the possession of the British king, there is none more beautiful or costly than the Koh-i-Nur, or Mountain of Light, and no diamond in the world can compare with it for the halo of romance with which it is surrounded, or the thrilling adventures through which it has passed.

Long before the Christian era there lived in the south of India a ruler who was king of Golconda, a region noted for its diamonds and the envy it aroused amongst the other kings of Hindustan. It was there the Koh-i-Nur had its origin and made its first appearance in a royal crown. Its beauty and lustre attracted the attention of other monarchs, and spread abroad even beyond the borders of Hindustan ; time passed on until the centuries had given fame to the Mountain of Light. In the meantime the emperors of India, or the Great Moghuls, had created an empire in Hindustan, the first among them being Babar the Lion, who invaded India in 1526, sweeping down from Central Asia across the north-west frontier, mainly through the Khyber Pass, the historic gateway of India, a road of sinister fame in the history of Britain in the East. Emerging with his medieval host from that rugged and

difficult mountain area on to the plains of Hindustan, he marched on Delhi, the capital of the country, the sacred city of India, and the scene more than three hundred years later of the most critical and valorous episodes of the Indian Mutiny.

Babar the Lion found the country divided among many petty kings and princes whom he proceeded to subdue, and within four years had so far succeeded that he not only cleared away all rivals, but had founded the great Moghul empire, the most powerful dynasty the world has ever seen, whilst in magnificence none other could compare with it. The courts and palaces of the kings of England and France paled into insignificance beside the splendour of the Moghul emperors, whose pomp and display were only to be equalled by the glory of dreams.

With Babar was his son Humayun, a prince devoted to the service of his father, and afterwards the most polished and considerate of the Moghul emperors.

Babar in his march southwards to Delhi had encountered Ibrahim Lodi, and Vikramajit, Rajah of Gwalior, whom he defeated at the battle of Panipat in 1527. Humayun had preceded his father, moving still farther south to Agra, which he captured together with the family of Vikramajit. To them he behaved with characteristic chivalry, and in return they handed over the Koh-i-Nur as tribute, with others of the great jewels of India.

Following with the main body of the Moghul army Babar made his triumphal entry into Agra, and at a durbar, or reception, organised in his honour, Humayun handed the emperor the diamond, then of colossal size. Babar looked at it in amazement, and remarked, 'This must surely be worth half the daily expense of the world.'

When Babar died in 1530, he left an empire stretching from the River Amu in Central Asia to the Ganges at Calcutta.

Of Babar the Lion there is nothing left, except a tiny garden on the banks of the Jumna at Agra, where the body of the famous emperor rested before removal to Kabul. Humayun, his son, reigned in his stead.

With the death of Humayun in 1556 came his son Akbar, a born soldier and a most able ruler, whose reign was contemporary with that of Queen Elizabeth of England. Under Akbar the Moghul dynasty rose to the zenith of its power and fame. Included in his inheritance was the famous diamond, but apart from possession of the gem Akbar had other and greater claims to fame. The



glamour of romance hangs over him, for he built the city of Fatehpur Sikri, a city without an equal in the world. It lies twenty-three miles south of Agra, its origin is lost in legend, and its desertion, after having been occupied for only a few years, is likewise wrapped in mystery. We only know that it was quietly abandoned, and for nearly four hundred years its palaces and halls, its terraces and streets have been empty, save for the jackal and the porcupine that haunt its numberless passages and make their home beneath the shadow of its kingly walls.

Among the various reasons assigned for the building of Fatehpur Sikri, the generally accepted, and certainly the most romantic, has to do with the hermit saint, Salim Chisti, whose descendants still live within the city, and with whom I held long conversations during my visit to this wonderful city of the dead.

Akbar was returning from the conquest of southern India, when he encamped by the village of Fatehpur. He was still without an heir, and the great heritage that he and his forefathers had created was in danger of being torn to pieces by rival aspirants for the succession.

So the emperor visited the hermit, who urged him to build a city at Fatehpur Sikri, whereupon his desire would be gratified. So Akbar, with the prodigality characteristic of the Moghul dynasty, took the work in hand. Italian artists and sculptors were requisitioned from Europe, and the work proceeded day and night. A seven-mile battlemented wall encompassed the city, and for the main entrance the Great Gate of Victory was erected, the loftiest gateway in the world, for it stands nearly one hundred and sixty feet in height. If the emperor could pass through it to-day he would find both the gateway and the entire city had been so lightly touched by the hand of time that they might have been built but yesterday. He would still see the marvellously decorated Hall of Private Audience, built for imperial pageantries, and securing the safety as well as the dignity of the royal person by the splendid isolation of his balcony and a secret door of escape. And facing the Hall of Audience he would still see the gigantic space laid out in black and white squares, with a border all round, the material used being pure marble. Here the game of 'pachisi,' a form of chess, was played on a royal scale. Akbar occupied a revolving seat in the centre of the board, and the pieces were beautiful slave girls appropriately dressed and bejewelled, who moved as the game progressed.

The city being built, the promised son and successor was born—Jehangir, known as the Conqueror of the World, but he was a poor ruler and a still worse soldier. His reign was chiefly noted for the time spent in drunken revelry; indeed, Sir Thomas Roe, the ambassador from Queen Elizabeth, tells us that when he was received in audience by Jehangir the leading question turned on the amount the envoy could drink in a day, the relative qualities of beer and Indian toddy being also discussed, as well as the feasibility of brewing beer in Agra. No more weighty business was dealt with, and the envoy returned to England to report to good Queen Bess that beer alone could cement the friendship between the two monarchs.

Jehangir reigned twenty-two years: then the Koh-i-Nur passed to the stronger hand of his rebellious son Shah Jehan.

It was now 1627, and, although Shah Jehan had commenced his kingly career by murdering his brother and sundry other members of the family who might interfere with his reign, he ruled wisely and well. Never was there such a cycle of romance as clings to the name of Shah Jehan; he it was who built the Taj Mahal, reputed to be the most beautiful building that the mind of man has ever conceived; in any case, it is certainly the most loving tribute to the memory of a woman. He also built the Pearl Mosque, characterised by those best qualified to judge as a structure of divine simplicity and dignified design.

Like Akbar, Shah Jehan did things on a regal scale, and in his many palaces the pomp and panoply of kings had no terrestrial equal. He was the greatest of the great Moghuls, and it was fitting that the Mountain of Light should come into his possession, and that the setting for its display should be on a par with its fame.

At his audiences and durbars Shah Jehan was seated upon a throne said to have cost six million pounds sterling; it was encrusted with precious stones, and the palace that housed it was worthy of the throne. As has been said, Shah Jehan ruled wisely and well; the many magnificent monuments he left will go down to posterity in their elements of splendour. Yet his life was clouded with tragedy, for the wife of his youth, Arjamand Banu, was empress but for one short year, and her son, Aurengzebe, constantly intrigued against his father, until in the end he deposed him and made him a prisoner in the palace at Agra that Shah Jehan had himself built with such grace and beauty.

Now another of the children of the Empress Arjamand Banu was the Princess Jehanara, a great favourite with Shah Jehan. When the emperor was deposed by Aurengzebe, this daughter Jehanara went with him into captivity and remained with him until his death.

Little does the world know it, but we owe what was practically the creation of our empire in India to a chance mishap, in which Jehanara was the leading figure. A slave girl when attending to her mistress had upset an oil lamp; Jahanara's clothes caught fire, and she was badly burned about the face. The emperor was terribly distressed at his daughter's misfortune, and cast around for an effective remedy. He evidently had little faith in native doctors for he sent off ~~post-haste~~ to a tiny English factory at Surat, on the Bombay coast, 560 miles away, where there happened to be one Gabriel Boughton, an English doctor, who was requested to come forthwith to Agra.

Boughton was cordially received by the emperor, but he laboured under disadvantages for he was not allowed to see his patient, since the rules of 'purdah', or veiling of women, forbade any such familiarity. His diagnosis was therefore made from behind a screen; Boughton, however, did it so well and prescribed with such skill, that he saved the lady's face unmarked.

Shah Jehan was delighted and would have given him practically anything he asked for, but Boughton merely requested that a charter should be granted to the East India Company according them the right to trade in Bengal. This was done, and the rest is history.

Strange are the workings of fate. The clumsy slave girl, the beautiful daughter, and the chance presence of the English doctor. On these happenings we built Calcutta and India.

During Shah Jehan's imprisonment Jehanara was in constant and devoted attendance; she also contrived to keep the famous Koh-i-Nur. On her father's death in 1666, she yielded to the demands of her brother Aurengzebe and surrendered the diamond, with the prophecy that the end of his dynasty was at hand.

When, in 1659, Aurengzebe had secured the throne by the imprisonment of his parent he conferred upon himself the title of 'Conqueror of the Universe,' one of ill omen, for he lived to see the great empire of the Moghuls fade away.

Nothing sensational appears to have happened to the Koh-i-Nur whilst in the hands of Aurengzebe, and so far as the old records

tell us, it was not until 1739 that it entered upon the most thrilling and romantic stage of its existence. At that time Nadir Shah was king of Persia, a doughty warrior and one who aimed at the conquest of the East. With this as his main object in life he invaded India, advancing through Afghanistan down to Delhi, which he captured as well as the Moghul emperor Mahommed Shah, the poor representative of a noble line.

Nadir Shah had been attracted by fabulous India, the goal of predatory rulers who knew they would find much loot and treasure in the plains of Hindustan. Like his forebears, who had led armies of Huns and Tartars, Mongols and Turks, he came down to India through the famous Khyber, gathering as he went bands of wild tribesmen whose country is still no man's land, and who recognise no law but that of the gun and the dagger, tribes with whom religion is a passion and war a still greater passion. For generations they have been accustomed to come out of their mountain fastnesses on a battle and plunder-loving expedition into the rich lands of northern India.

Nadir Shah not only coveted this wealthy expanse ; he aimed at the Koh-i-Nur and longed to possess it. So with the conquest of Delhi, and the capture of its puppet monarch, he was very near to the goal of his ambition. He treated his captive well, a procedure doubtless born of a desire to learn the whereabouts of the jewel, of which, at the time when Nadir Shah entered Delhi, there was no trace. The entire city was ransacked for the diamond, no stone was left unturned in the search for it, but neither Nadir Shah nor his army could discover the least trace.

The feminine element was then called in to assist in the hunt ; a leading lady in the harem of Mahommed Shah, anxious to propitiate the new ruler, made love to him and revealed the hiding-place.

So great a value did Mahommed Shah place upon the gem, which at that time appears to have been worth four hundred thousand pounds, that he carried it about with him day and night, securely tucked away in the voluminous folds of his turban. Now, there were several courses open to Nadir Shah ; he could murder his imperial captive and so secure the diamond without further ado, he could have him robbed in the dead of night, or he could ply him with wine and then get possession of the coveted stone.

For various reasons he did not adopt any of these courses ; on the contrary, Nadir had a sense of chivalry, but it was original.

He invited Mahommed Shah to a magnificent banquet at Delhi, in the palace that covers a great extent of ground and is a wonder-land of domes and pillared halls, of vast piazzas and entrancing pleasure gardens. Amidst this splendour Mahommed Shah was entertained, and here the acme of compliments was paid to the fallen ruler by a custom obtaining amongst the high and mighty in the East.

If you are an Oriental potentate and wish to show special regard for your guest, it is customary, after deprecating the quality and value of your own head-gear, to suggest, by way of mutual love and esteem, to exchange it for that of your guest. In Europe such an exchange of compliments and the possible loss of one's hat, might not appeal to most people, and those who were economically inclined would probably leave their best at home. In the East, however, you are, *inter alia*, judged largely by your head-gear, so the more exalted your rank the more resplendent it must be.

The banquet proceeded, and towards the end Nadir Shah in a graceful speech praised the courage and ability of his guest, spoke of the friendship that would henceforth exist between them, and concluded by proposing, as a lasting token of amity, that they should exchange turbans.

It was a desperate moment for Mahommed Shah ; no one but a conjurer could have saved the priceless diamond then lying within the folds of his head-gear. Nadir Shah suited the action to the word, gracefully removed the turban of the luckless Mahommed and substituted his own.

So passed the Mountain of Light to Nadir, Shah of Persia and conqueror of Hindustan, who shortly afterwards returned to his native land carrying with him loot and an indemnity to the value of more than ninety million pounds sterling.

From time immemorial it was said that the Koh-i-Nur would bring ill-fortune to men ; the ban does not appear to have extended to women possessors, nor to its display in the crown of a queen. So far as kings were concerned, it had certainly proved its sinister reputation up to the time when it came into possession of Nadir Shah.

When he left Delhi in 1739 with his army on the return to Persia, trouble soon began to surround him ; repressive measures were adopted, but they could not check the tide of uneasiness and discontent that had set in. Finally, in 1747 Nadir's tyrannical methods led to assassination, his throne was overturned and his dynasty

destroyed. One of his generals, Ahmed Khan Abdali, then seized the throne, and took possession of the Koh-i-Nur from Nadir's son who had been blinded by his own father in a fit of semi-madness. Ahmed Khan, in appropriating the jewel remarked, 'Of what value is so wonderful a gem to a blind man?'

The new king captured Kandahar and laid the foundation of the modern Afghan power, but in an invasion of India he was heavily defeated.

With the death of Ahmed Khan the diamond passed to his son, and later on to the next king of that turbulent land. This was Shah Shuja, who was dethroned and driven out of Afghanistan in 1810. Twenty years later the shadow of Russian advance appeared on the political horizon of Central Asia, whilst Persia had engaged in a conflict with Russia and been badly mauled in the process. Angered at the failure of England to come to her aid she, to all intents and purposes, entered the Russian fold. This created a dangerous phase and the rulers of empire at Westminster became seriously alarmed. They conjured up visions of Moslem hegemony in Asia, under the auspices of the Shah, who at that time was regarded as the virtual head of Islam. With Afghanistan in his power he would be at the very gates of India, and the Moslems of Hindustan would side with him.

The great Sikh state, with its capital at Lahore, under the rule of Ranjit Singh, was not only favourably disposed towards us, but was definitely anti-Moslem.

Shah Shuja on his ejection from Kabul sought refuge at the Court of Ranjit Singh, taking his precious Koh-i-Nur with him, despite the ill-luck that had dogged all its possessors since it came into their hands.

On arrival in Lahore the deposed king sought the aid and protection of Ranjit Singh, the Lion of the Punjab, a very astute and sagacious ruler. The Lion received the Afghan Amir but he granted his favours only at a price, which was to be the surrender of the Koh-i-Nur.

The arrival of Shah Shuja in India to seek refuge with Ranjit Singh had a profound effect upon British policy with regard to Afghanistan, and ultimately led to the Koh-i-Nur passing into our possession.

For some inscrutable reason the government in India thought it best to dethrone Dost Mahommed, then Amir of Afghanistan, and restore to power the restless and discredited Shah Shuja. They



had no faith in Dost Mahommed and were convinced that Shah Shuja would be much more amenable and more or less under their control. The idea was to create a buffer state out of Afghanistan, with the aid of the Sikhs, but the plan had several drawbacks, not the least of which was the problem of how we were to maintain Shah Shuja on the Afghan throne when we had put him there.

So began the disastrous Afghan War of 1839; the British troops marched through the country, occupying Kandahar and Ghazni on the way. Dost Mahommed fled and Shah Shuja was duly enthroned in Kabul, but it was a most unpopular move. No one wanted the wretched Shah Shuja, and it at once became clear that as British bayonets had set him up so they must maintain him on his rickety throne.

The weeks and months went on, the dislike of the Afghans increased in intensity, their implacable hatred of the British growing as a fire when fanned by a strong wind. This culminated in a great rising, the British garrison at Kabul was practically annihilated, and, if the remnants were to escape, retreat was the only course open to them.

So on January 6, 1842, in a blinding snowstorm, the army of five thousand men, of whom only about eight hundred were British, began the retirement on India, encumbered with a large quantity of baggage and eleven thousand camp followers. The first day out they were heavily attacked by the Afghans, and before dawn the next morning three thousand had perished with the cold and by sword and bullet. The survivors struggled on, until at Gundamuk, miles from the Indian frontier, they numbered only sixty-five officers and men. From there to Jellalabad all but one perished—Surgeon Brydon who arrived at that outpost on January 13, the last of an original army of fifteen thousand.

In the meantime Dost Mahommed had retaken the Afghan throne and capital, but the Koh-i-Nur was not among the spoils.

As has been told, the gem had passed from Shah Shuja to the Lahore maharajah, but once more it did not carry good luck with it. Ranjit died in 1839, and ten years later the great military state that he had built up in the north of India had ceased to exist; it had been annexed to the British Empire following the Sikh War of 1849. With it came the Koh-i-Nur, which now entered upon another phase of its adventures.

After the conquest of the Punjab and the total defeat of the Sikh forces, the question as to disposal of the diamond came up,

The final decision was that it should be presented to Queen Victoria. In the interval it had to be safeguarded, and was therefore entrusted to the care of Sir John Lawrence, Chief Commissioner at Lahore, pending transfer to England.

Apart from being somewhat absent-minded Sir John had numerous weighty matters on hand, so putting the diamond into his waistcoat pocket he thought no more about it. Several days later, when the subject of the diamond again came before the executive, Sir John remembered that he had left it in the pocket of an old drill waistcoat, which in the meantime his native servant had sent to the laundry.

In a flash he realised that the priceless gem, for which a king might have risked his empire, was gone! In fear and trembling he called for his servant, who told him that he had sent the waistcoat to the wash, first, however, taking out the piece of glass for fear it should cut a hole in master's 'west.'

The narrow escape gave Sir John such a fright that he applied to the Governor-General for permission to send the diamond to Bombay for safe custody. A trustworthy officer was therefore detailed to take it down, a critical enterprise, owing to the dangers of the road, the immense value of the packet, and the length of time taken up on the journey.

In those days the road from Lahore to Bombay, thirteen hundred miles, swarmed with robbers, dacoits, and the famous strangling fraternity known as the Thugs. The route led through the heart and focus of the Thug system, gloomy jungles and notorious caves where Sleeman discovered deep graves containing murdered people buried by fifties, the head of one at the feet of the next, in the approved Thug fashion.

The road leading past this gruesome spot was known among the Thugs of the vicinity by the humorous name of 'Strangle Street,' for the entire population of the district were Thugs, deeply dyed in villainies innumerable, and flourishing on the proceeds of murder.

However, the officer chosen for this hazardous mission carried the Koh-i-Nur in safety through it all to Bombay, whence it was despatched to London for presentation to Queen Victoria. It now adorns the crown of Queen Mary.

### FORTY YEARS OF BUREAUCRACY.

WHEN the social history of the present generation comes to be written the historian will have a superabundance of material with which to elucidate the life and thought of almost every class of the community. A flood of memoirs, reminiscences, biographies and autobiographies constantly flows from the Press and shows no signs of abating. Everyone, from bishops to butlers and bath-chairmen, prime ministers to pugilists, members of the different professions, diplomatists, men of science, artists, crooks and cranks—the life-histories of all alike are published for the general interest and presumably find readers. Many of such reminiscences no doubt are not to be taken seriously and are written without any real intention of recording facts, but, taken with due reserve the literature of to-day, even that which seems most ephemeral, will unquestionably prove an inexhaustible mine of information to future historians of social progress.

One class alone, and that one which is daily increasing in importance, forms an exception to the general rule. Members of the Civil Service rarely write their own memoirs, and still more rarely is it considered worth while to write memoirs of them. Even when a retired civil servant publishes reminiscences he is likely to do so with a particular purpose which tends to the exclusion of all reference to the ordinary routine of a Government office. In fiction again the civil servant rarely appears except in the shape of a young Foreign Office clerk modelled on a formula which follows traditional lines and scarcely approximates to modern conditions. Anthony Trollope in *The Three Clerks* gave a very life-like picture of the inside of a Government office in his own day, though probably the picture verged on caricature: it would, I believe, be impossible to find any similar representation of a Government office within the last forty years, during which the officials of the old school, the products of political or family patronage, have been almost entirely replaced by men and more recently by women who obtain their appointment by means of competitive examination.

The general public knows little or nothing of the inside of an ordinary Government office—the methods of the bureaucracy

are known to it only through an occasional scandal which involves a public enquiry, and occasional interviews with Government officials which leave the enquirer wondering and perplexed. Every year at the Civil Service dinner eminent politicians heap unstinted praise on the permanent officials whose guests they are, and from time to time these officials have to be defended by their political chiefs from criticisms which are usually ill informed and sometimes malicious, but such post-prandial utterances cannot be taken *au pied de la lettre*. It can scarcely be denied that a real knowledge of the working of the present bureaucracy is restricted to a comparatively small number of politicians who hold or have held office in Government departments, and they, generally speaking, have no interest in diffusing such information as they may have picked up with regard to the work done there, and at any rate are reluctant to criticise men who have worked well for them and enabled them to maintain a creditable appearance before the public. Civil servants are indeed on the whole singularly immune from intelligent criticism.

This is a pity—Socialism has immensely extended its influence during the last thirty years and is still extending it, and the most important of all present-day domestic questions turns on the extent to which socialistic experiment can be carried with advantage. And the answer to that question obviously depends on the character and quality of the instruments by which such experiments are to be conducted. Every advance made by Socialism involves an increase in the number of public officials; no means have been suggested for obtaining abler or more honest men and women for carrying on the work of the nation than those who are at present engaged on it, yet how can any voter form a reasonable opinion on the issue between Socialists and anti-Socialists without at least some acquaintance with the capacity and administration shown by the servants of the public, on whom the success of any new socialistic venture must depend?

The present writer confesses to a strong inclination towards Socialism as a political theory—that all the work by which the whole community is directly affected, the work done in mines, railways, factories and workshops, on farms and by the various distributing agencies, should be done under a public authority for the public benefit and not merely for individual gain. This is a very fascinating ideal and it may be of help to others in deciding whether an attempt to realise that ideal would prove an advantage to

the public, if I set down as briefly as possible the actual facts, which in the mind of one individual at least have turned the balance heavily against Socialism and convinced him that even apart from the question of cost a diminution rather than an increase in the vast army of officialdom is what is required in the public interest.

The present writer does not pretend to have an intimate knowledge of the whole Civil Service—no one can have that. One department of State differs so widely from another that conclusions drawn from actual experience of one or even of several of them are likely to be wholly inapplicable to some others. But he can claim that forty years' service in one of the larger Whitehall Government offices has given him a fairly good knowledge of the interior economy of others of the same class, and at all events a record of facts within his personal knowledge may be of general interest.

What in the first place are the qualities that are most essential for every permanent civil servant? I think it may be said that there are four—integrity, industry, readiness to carry out unhesitatingly the views of his political chief, and a fair share of intelligence and common sense. Other qualifications are desirable, such as tact, good humour and a pleasant manner, some knowledge of the world, a good command of English and some acquaintance with other languages, a training in the law, and so on—all these are likely to be useful to a man engaged in public administration, but the four I have first mentioned are unquestionably of primary importance and one may fairly call them indispensable. We will take each of these in turn.

1. First, as regards honesty, the English civil servant has a very high reputation. Eulogists frequently describe it as the envy of all other nations, and this praise is probably well deserved. So far as my personal experience goes, the standard of honesty among the rank and file of the Service is high. Cases of speculation, embezzlement, and the taking of bribes are no doubt brought to light from time to time. Indeed, where large bodies of men are exposed to temptation in this direction it is inevitable that some should give way to it—but in all the cases within my own knowledge, the offenders have been punished so severely, their conduct has excited so much resentment among their fellows and such elaborate precautions have been taken against a repetition of the offence, that it may be safely assumed that dishonesty of

an actual criminal complexion is as rare among civil servants as could be expected by anyone who has any regard to the frailties of human nature.

The general public may be assured that when a Government employee has been detected in the commission of any crime against his employers, prosecution is likely to follow with at least as much certainty as in the case of an offender in any private employment, and the Press is far more likely to give publicity to the prosecution. Postmen stand in a peculiar position; a large proportion are not civil servants at all: they are only employed temporarily and are exposed to very special temptations. If theft is not uncommon in the Post Office staff there is certainly no other class of Government employees of which the same could be said—the rare instances of actual crime occurring in the public service afford no valid argument against a further extension of its functions.

But there are other forms of dishonesty than theft or corruption which may be roughly grouped under the head of jobbery or nepotism. With regard to these, sweeping charges are sometimes made against the Civil Service with little or no justification. According to the present writer's experience, permanent civil servants are, as a rule, too anxious to have the work of their office well done and have too much genuine public spirit to favour any appointments to the public service of men who are not in their opinion the best suited for the work they have to do. Moreover, permanent civil servants rarely have the opportunity of helping their friends or relations at the public expense. With few exceptions the persons appointed to the permanent Civil Service have been selected by means of competitive examination, and any other appointments are in the hands of the political chiefs. Jobbery cannot at present be regarded as a vice of the permanent Civil Service in this country. But one incident that has come to my knowledge raises some doubt as to the results that would follow from any extension of officialdom which would give officials wider opportunities for jobbery. The facts, which I believe to be indisputable, are as follows:

Shortly before the War a committee of three officials, presided over by a highly placed official whom I will designate as X, made certain recommendations for an administrative reorganisation which involved a costly building programme. Their recommendations were accepted, and thereupon X's brother was appointed to carry out this programme. He was a young architect who had



not previously been engaged at any work of a similar kind, nor indeed, so far as I can ascertain, on any other work of importance. It was at all events clear beyond dispute that he owed his appointment to his brother's influence rather than to his own proved merits. After a very considerable amount of public money had been spent on building, the officials for whose accommodation the building had been designed entered into occupation. They were by no means satisfied with what had been done. Some of the work had to be done over again forthwith, other defects showed themselves later, and some proved irremediable. Great therefore was their chagrin when they discovered that the work actually done was only part of a larger scheme, and till this scheme was completed the architect was to remain in charge of the buildings and be entrusted to carry out any minor works that might become necessary, such as the construction of a shed or the erection of a wall—charging public funds with the appropriate fee for his services.

As there appeared to them no probability of need arising for the completion of the approved scheme or indeed for any substantial extension of the building they occupied, they could come to no other conclusion than that the scheme recommended by X's committee was designed not so much in the public interest as in the interest of X's brother. The matter was brought to the notice of the Treasury, the agreement with the architect was terminated, and the building, like most other Government buildings, was put under the charge of the Office of Works. Other work under Government was subsequently provided for the architect. Very shortly after his departure it was found that the building was no longer required for the purpose for which it was erected, and it was converted to other uses. Some allowances may have to be made in drawing any conclusion from the facts I have given above: X's committee may have had solid ground for their estimate of future requirements, though the estimate proved to be wholly erroneous; the architect selected for the work may have had special qualifications for it which were not generally apparent; and the mistakes he made may not have been greater than what architects of wider experience may often make; but whatever allowances are made, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that a large amount of public money had in fact been expended to no other purpose than to provide the brother of a highly placed official with lucrative employment at the public cost.

The incident itself is in my experience wholly exceptional, but some of the circumstances attending it are significant. X's credit with his fellow-officials does not seem to have suffered in any way from what to an ordinary observer must appear to be a perfectly clear case of jobbery. Men who would have been very severe on any of their subordinates taking advantage of their official position to secure Government contracts or any other pecuniary advantages for their friends or relations, appeared to consider such action quite legitimate or at all events altogether pardonable on the part of such a highly placed official as X. The official who took the most active part in bringing the contract with the architect to a termination (whom I will designate as Y) received little or no encouragement or support. On the contrary, it was hinted that any attempt on Y's part to interfere with X's plans for his brother's advancement would be unfriendly, 'disloyal' to his superior officer, almost indecent. And if it was not 'disloyal,' it would at least be dangerous. X was reputed to be of a jealous and somewhat vindictive temper: he was not likely to forgive such action as Y contemplated, and he was in a position to make his displeasure felt. Later events seemed to prove that this warning was not without justification. From the date of this incident Y, who had previously had a fairly prosperous career in the Civil Service and whose administrative capacity had on several occasions been specially recognised, passed completely under a cloud: he was allowed no promotion, and in fact man after man was promoted over his head. To use an expression common in the precincts of Whitehall, he was notoriously and conclusively 'side-tracked.' As no allegations of incompetence, indolence, bad temper or indiscretion were made against him, it is not surprising if those of his colleagues who were familiar with the facts attributed his ill-luck to the ill-will he had brought on himself by frustrating the plans of his superior officer. It would seem therefore that the 'high standard of honour' maintained by the Civil Service does not wholly preclude jobbery on the part of a highly placed official nor the condonation of it by his colleagues, and if an extension of Socialism were to afford—as it inevitably would—more frequent opportunities for nepotism and jobbery, the public spirit in the Service is not at present of itself sufficiently strong to prevent those who were inclined that way from taking advantage of their position to the detriment of the public.

2. So far as the second of our four cardinal virtues is con-

cerned, little needs to be said. Most of the young men who succeed in competitive examinations for the Civil Service have formed in their youth a habit of industry. Some may be of brilliant intellectual capacity, though really brilliant young men generally aim at some more promising career than a Government office affords, but all are hard workers and the habit of working hard endures. It is true that the hours of attendance are not long—in most of the offices I know, seven hours are expected of all members of what used to be known as the Upper Division and is now styled the Administrative Class—and for a good many of this class seven hours is more than is reasonably necessary for the proper discharge of the duties falling on them. This was certainly true in my own case for a considerable part of my official career, and if a Government official is found idling during an undue proportion of the time he is supposed to be engaged on his official duties, the reason may very well be not that he wishes to shirk, but that there is not enough work to occupy his full time, and he may reasonably feel that to idle away time is at least better than to 'make work' in order to fill it up. A habit of industry, unless it is kept under proper control, is apt to create a habit of fussiness, and it is probable that a considerable number of the official enquiries and forms with which the public are increasingly pestered, are due to officials who have not enough real work to engage their energies, but who do not enjoy being idle, and do not scruple to impose work on others without considering what useful purpose it is likely to serve.

It requires an intimate knowledge of the workings of a Government office to say how far industry in it may have degenerated into fussiness, but at least the general public may be satisfied that when (as for instance during the War) more strenuous efforts and longer hours of work may become necessary, the industry of the staff is not likely to be found lacking.

3. The third of our cardinal virtues—that which specially endears the permanent civil servant to his political chief—will be found, I believe, to exist in abundance wherever Government officials are to be found. I have occasionally, but very rarely, heard it suggested that So-and-so is not doing his best to carry out a decision to which he was personally strongly opposed, but in no single instance have I found such an insinuation to be substantiated. On the contrary, the average civil servant is apt to take a special pride in carrying out smoothly and successfully a

policy which he believes in his heart to be unwise, and thereby showing that a man who has recognised to the full the difficulties inherent in his political chief's designs and was strongly opposed to them, is more capable of dealing with those difficulties as they arise than one who has failed to realise them beforehand.

It is probable that if a Communist Government were to come into power they would find the ordinary Government officials (who are conspicuously free from any Communistic principles) better fitted to carry out those principles effectively than they are themselves. Whether the average civil servant would carry his instinct for submission to lawful authority, so far as to subject himself to a purely Communistic régime, is a question into which fortunately there is not and is never likely to be any occasion to enquire.

The 'loyalty,' which is one of the most essential virtues of the civil servant, is no doubt sometimes carried too far. I remember discussing with an old and experienced official a matter of considerable importance which was to come before our chief for decision. We seemed to be both agreed on the policy which in the long run appeared to be most likely to succeed, but from our knowledge of the chief we were also agreed that it was one which he would be somewhat disinclined to adopt. My colleague, in fact, was almost sure he would not do so. As I was strongly of the opinion that the alternative course of action would eventually lead to great difficulty, I put the view on which we had agreed decidedly, but in as temperate language as I could command in an official minute.

Our chief took the opposite view, and my colleague in commenting on his decision remarked to me: 'Well, you see that I was right and you were wrong about that question.' I asked him what he meant by this, as I had understood that he agreed with what I had urged in my minute, and the reply was, 'That may have been my personal view, but unfortunately it was not the chief's view!' I discovered afterwards that in his own minute he had set down the pros and cons of the question, but had carefully refrained from indicating his own view. No doubt at all times permanent officials have been tempted to furnish their political chiefs with such opinions as are likely to be acceptable to them rather than those which their administrative experience suggests, but I am inclined to think that the tendency to do so is more prevalent now than it was forty years ago when I first entered

the Service. The reasons for this we may have occasion to discuss later.

4. When the last of the civil servant's cardinal virtues comes to be considered, a curious paradox presents itself. There can be no question that the intellectual standard of the First Division or Administrative Class of the Civil Service is incomparably higher than it was forty years ago, when the great bulk of the staff was still composed of men who owed their appointment to patronage. Few of those whom I remember on my first appointment to the Service would have made a creditable figure in any examination designed to test their intellectual capacity, and I think the bulk of them would have been quite incapable of carrying on efficiently some of the more arduous duties which the Administrative Class are now expected to discharge. At the present time, speaking generally, no young man is likely to succeed in the competition for appointment to this class unless his intellectual attainments are sufficient to enable him to obtain first or second-class honours at Oxford or to reach some equally high standard in competition with others. And yet intelligence and common sense do not appear to have increased in a similar ratio: competitive examination for the Civil Service has not, in fact, produced the results which might have been expected of it—'red tape' is as dominant as ever. It might indeed be contended that it exercises a stronger influence than it did. I am convinced that no impartial judge who had opportunities for making himself familiar with the interior economy of any of the larger Government offices would feel now, any more than he would have felt forty years ago, that sense of satisfaction, which a skilful adaptation of means to ends so that a maximum of output can be effected with a minimum of labour, produces in a well-ordered factory or other concern under private management: 'red tape' has by no means been suppressed by competitive examination.

'Red tape' is a term that is much abused. There are some who do not recognise that good administration involves continuity of practice, and complain whenever a well-established rule of practice stands in the way of their own advantage or convenience. There are some even who do not recognise that a Government servant must conform to the law and can no more than anyone else abrogate or modify an Act of Parliament merely because in a particular case it causes needless trouble or a manifest absurdity.

But setting aside unreasonable persons, who stigmatise as 'red tape' anything they do not like in the practice of Government departments, I do not think the majority of ordinary sensible folk who have had much business to transact with a Government department are altogether satisfied with the mode in which it is transacted. Too often they are likely to treat with some underling who shows them great courtesy and seems anxious to act in accordance with common sense and ordinary intelligence, but to be debarred from doing so by some malign influence whose instructions he is bound to obey. 'Red tape' may be regarded as a product of hide-bound conservatism and adherence to precedent, a dread of personal responsibility and (partly as a consequence of this) a love of complicated administrative machinery which makes it impossible either to fix responsibility for any particular action on any particular individual, or to get any business transacted with reasonable expedition. It is often thought that 'red tape' is the vice of the subordinate members of the official hierarchy against which their more enlightened superiors struggle in vain. This is by no means always the case. In my own experience the most unquestionable improvements in the machinery of administration have been generally adopted at the instance of a subordinate staff whom they most directly affect, and have not been forced on them against their will. More often than the outside public is likely to imagine, 'red tape' is made obligatory by superior authority blind or indifferent to the waste of time and loss of efficiency it involves.

I will give three instances of this which will also illustrate the three aspects of 'red tape' which I have enumerated above. They are all taken from the Home Office, not because I have any reason to suppose that the Home Office is any more dominated by 'red tape' than other Government offices, but because the facts are beyond dispute, they are quite simple and very illustrative and, above all, they occurred in the early part of the War when the whole nation was, as it was believed, strung to the highest pitch on behalf of King and Country. If at such a national crisis 'red tape' could give rise to the imbecility which the instances I will proceed to set out make manifest, my readers may judge what influence it has on the ordinary routine of Government departments in peace-time.

1. On the outbreak of War a very large proportion of factories were strained to the utmost to supply munitions without any



avoidable delay to the Expeditionary Force and create a sufficient reserve for future needs. The factory hands were as anxious as their employers to work overtime for this purpose. The inducement was not merely the extra pay earned, but with a large proportion of the workers there was also a very genuine desire to 'do their bit' towards winning the War. At that time, in fact, overtime was being worked wherever there was work to be done on behalf of our soldiers. Unfortunately women and young persons are not allowed by law to work in factories beyond certain statutory hours except in pursuance of licences issued from the Home Office, and the number of applications for such licences at the beginning of the War was so enormous that the Home Office staff was quite unable to deal with them in time for the work to be done. The factory inspectors are instructed generally to prosecute any contravention of the Factory Acts that comes to their knowledge, however trivial it may appear, but being men of ordinary common sense some of them decided that the occurrence of war was a sufficient occasion for making an exception to the general rule and refrained from prosecuting factories where overtime was worked in contravention of the Factory Acts in order to meet the demands of the military authorities, unless the overtime was extended so far as to be likely to impair the efficiency of the women and young persons employed on it. As soon as this was brought to the notice of 'superior authority' at the Home Office, the factory inspectors who had actually adopted the above policy were called to book and were told positively, in spite of formal protests, that war had made no difference whatever in Home Office policy, and they must prosecute for every offence of overtime whatever excuse might be offered. It need scarcely be said that this policy proved quite impracticable. Magistrates refused to convict factory owners for allowing women and young persons to work overtime in order to supply the urgent requirements of the War Office without waiting for permission from the Home Office to do so; and in dismissing summonses made some caustic remarks on the action taken by the Home Office. The policy of common sense had therefore perforce to be adopted. But 'red tape' had, after all, the last word. It was decided not to allow the inspectors a free discretion in the matter of these technical offences, but to require them to issue a 'provisional permit'—which had no legal validity whatever—when need arose at the munition factories for overtime work by women or young

persons. They had then to report each case to headquarters, and a considerable staff was employed at the Home Office, at a time when the need for economising man-power was being most strongly emphasised, in drawing up formal licences for the overtime work. Many thousands of these must have been drawn up long after the special occasions for which they were needed were past. It would be of some interest to know whether they were then issued to the persons concerned or remain among the archives of the Home Office.

2. At a later period the Government decided that prisoners who were legally liable to military service and thoroughly fit for service at the front, might be discharged a few weeks or even a few months before their sentences would expire in the ordinary course, in order to secure a larger number of recruits for training in time for the offensive contemplated in the following spring.

Detailed directions were laid down as to the class of men who were to be selected and the amount by which their sentences could be reduced for this purpose; but such a measure had not been adopted on any previous occasion, the Governors of Prisons have ordinarily no power to release any prisoner before the expiration of his sentence except on explicit instructions from the Home Office, so though it was proposed that in this very special and urgent case they should be allowed to carry out the decision of the Government on their own responsibility, the Home Office would not hear of this. Accordingly a separate form had to be drawn up giving full particulars of each prisoner whom the Prison Governor had selected as suitable for special release. This was sent up to the Home Office, where it went through the usual official routine, being minuted first by a junior clerk, paid at the rate of £200 a year, then by a higher official drawing a salary of £1,200, then by another drawing a salary of £1,500, and finally by the Under-Secretary of State, and occasionally by the Home Secretary himself. The official drawing a salary of £1,200 on one occasion passed on a whole batch of these forms without minuting them and they were returned for his initials. Afterwards he seems to have dropped out of the chain altogether, but no doubt this was regarded as irregular, and on the other hand the machinery was elaborated in some instances further by a reference to the War Office, and the Army Council, at a time when it was struggling with the task of raising armies by the hundred thousand, was invited in a formal, official letter to take into consideration the

question whether a particular housebreaker or pickpocket should be allowed to join the Army a few weeks before his sentence would expire in the ordinary course. No doubt at the War Office the co-operation of as many officials was required as at the Home Office to come to a conclusion on the point. It is a common rule in Whitehall which should be borne in mind when any question of reducing the cost of the Civil Service is under consideration, that no official action except action of a purely routine character should be taken except on a minute to which the initials of at least three officials are appended. In the present case the result of the machinery described above was that of the men recommended by the Prison Governors for early release, a small, a very small proportion—probably not more than 1 per cent.—were made to serve their sentences in full—and even in these cases it is permissible to doubt whether the judgment of the Home Office based on written reports from the prisons was necessarily better than that of the Prison Governors who held the men in their custody.

3. At a time when the prisons were full of 'conscientious objectors' to military service, many of whom were of the most respectable antecedents and high moral character, the Home Secretary on urgent representations made to him not only by so-called 'pro-Germans,' but equally by persons who wholly disapproved of the attitude taken up by 'conscientious objectors,' decided that prisoners of the type indicated might be released on parole for a few hours or even a whole day for the purpose of visiting near relations believed to be on the point of death, or of attending their funeral. In common justice this concession was extended to other prisoners also when a sufficiently good case for it was presented, but it was soon found that if applications for the purpose were dealt with in accordance with the normal procedure of the Home Office as described above, no decision could in many cases be arrived at till too late. Permission for a prisoner to leave prison in order to visit a dying relative was of no use unless granted promptly, and it was necessary that the ordinary procedure should be shortened and one person made responsible for deciding whether a particular application should be granted or not. Two of the senior officials to whom the duty would be naturally assigned, shrank from accepting such a responsibility. They declared that unless they were allowed time for exhaustive enquiry into the merits of each case they would be unable to discriminate between appli-

cations made in good faith and for good cause and others—if they granted one they must grant all, and failures of justice would inevitably occur. The task of dealing with all such applications was accordingly given to a subordinate. I understand that by the exercise of common sense and self-reliance he found no difficulty in exercising the authority with which he was vested, and in no single instance has a prisoner temporarily released on parole to visit a dying relative or attend a funeral proved unworthy of the indulgence shown him.

The facts given above illustrate not only the extent to which adherence to precedent and fear of personal responsibility may dominate the minds of higher officials, even more than those of a lower status, but also another feature of the bureaucracy as it exists at present. Where an admitted mistake is attributable to 'red tape' it is not likely to prejudice the career of the man who made it. In some Government offices it seems rather to be regarded as evidence of administrative ability!

At the Home Office it may still be considered that the elaborate machinery described above for securing a more rapid supply of recruits to the Army at a time when recruits were most urgently needed, was justified by the results achieved. But in the other two instances of 'red tape' above cited, facts themselves showed that mistakes had been made of a somewhat serious nature. The attempt to ignore altogether the existence of a war, so far as the enforcement of the Factory Acts was concerned, not only aroused great resentment in the very quarters on which the nation was most dependent for the production of munitions of war, but would have, without doubt, greatly hampered the conduct of the War if it had not been promptly countered by the action of the police courts. Again, the reluctance of two high officials to undertake a responsibility which one of their subordinates proved himself able to discharge with complete success pointed to a deplorable lack of the self-reliance which is essential to good administration. To the unofficial mind it would seem that mistakes of such magnitude would be likely to prejudice the career of those who made them and perhaps even to bar further advancement. At the Home Office a different view was taken. Very shortly after the incidents recorded above the salaries of the official who was most emphatic in declaring that the outbreak of war should make no difference in the work of the Factory Inspectors, and of the two others who shrank from taking the responsibility of releasing

prisoners on parole, were substantially increased, and that not in the ordinary course of promotion. Two of them, moreover, were honoured by a K.C.B., the customary accompaniment of any Civil Service salary of more than £1,500—the third had this distinction already.

It may be safely assumed that their subordinates who had shown better judgment and more self-reliance gained no advantage thereby. It is much more probable that they suffered from having expressed views to which their superiors were strongly opposed and which eventually proved to be correct. Jealousy is the commonest of all vices, and the Civil Service is by no means immune from it.

Such then is the nature of 'red tape' as I have seen it during forty years' service under Government. I should not like to say it is now more dominant than it was in my early days; I certainly cannot say it is less so. It is probably an inherent vice of all bureaucracies. If any information were available we should no doubt find it rampant in the ancient empires of Egypt and Mesopotamia and perhaps even more in the portentous and soul-destroying bureaucracy of contemporary Russia—the Soviet Government is not at all likely to have improved on the administrative methods of the Empire. The Socialists may protest that in a purely socialistic community such as they would establish, the bureaucracy would take a different form, but till human nature itself has been wholly changed, I see no reason for supposing that such an anticipation can be realised. We have seen the reins of Government pass from Conservatives to Liberals, from Liberals to Conservatives, then to Socialists, but it does not appear that such political changes have had the slightest effect on the general character of the Government departments. Many new departments have been created, but so far as my experience goes the work in them is carried on with no less 'red tape' than in departments of older standing. Endless experiments in the reorganisation of the departments have been and still are being made; some have undoubtedly increased the complexity and consequently the cumbrousness of the administrative machinery: it would be difficult to mention any which has simplified it, or made it more expeditious in its operations. One may reasonably believe that progress has been made in some aspects of administration during the present generation without believing that 'red tape' has been perceptibly diminished. It remains to

be seen whether a 'National' Government will be able to improve on their predecessors' record in this matter.

It has sometimes been suggested that the evil arises from the staff being recruited almost entirely by men who enter it at an early age before they had gained any experience of the world and who have little opportunity of gaining it within the strait walls of a Government office, and that it might be improved by introducing a certain proportion of men of maturer age who could bring to it a breadth of vision, a knowledge of human nature and a sympathy with the ordinary man's point of view, the lack of which seems to be the most crying need of the Service. There is much to be said in favour of such a plan, but it is improbable that it would be successful in combating the evil of 'red tape.' So far as the present writer's experience goes, the men who have entered the Civil Service otherwise than through competitive examination have been no more favourably disposed than others towards reform in the details of administration. Indeed, the most hide-bound bureaucrats I have had dealings with during the forty years of my public service came under this category.

Let me attempt to give my readers an impression of a very typical bureaucrat, not by any means among the least competent of the staff on which depends the success of the public services. He was appointed to a well-paid post in the public service in middle age after a not very successful career at the Bar. Outside his office he was a fairly shrewd and kindly man of the world—though no doubt his world was somewhat narrowly confined—with a distinct sense of humour, an imperturbable temper and a very modest estimate of his own merits. In his official capacity these amiable qualities were hidden under a frigid, solemn and almost inhuman mask of official correctitude. I have been often amused at the look of discomfort and positive apprehension that would pass over his face at any suggestion that 'the official view' on any question under discussion was mistaken or was subject to exception or might even have to be modified to meet a change of circumstances. Such suggestions were to him mere blasphemy, as shocking as criticisms of Holy Writ were to most clerics of fifty years ago. It would be unfair to assume that if at the beginning of the War such a question as that which afflicted the Home Office in regard to the enforcement of the Factory Acts in munition factories had come before him, he would have adopted the view which was in the first instance adopted by the Home Office,



but it is certain that when it had once been adopted he would have struggled with the utmost tenacity to maintain it. How such a frame of mind was generated in a man who in his private capacity did not show less than the average man's intelligence and common sense is a matter of some interest, and an explanation is, I think, possible. It would seem that on his entry into the public service, he was greatly elated by his good luck, sincerely anxious to justify it, but painfully conscious of his own entire lack of administrative experience and too diffident to suppose that common sense could compensate for this deficiency. Inevitably on every point that came before him for decision he had recourse to official precedent, and this constant reliance on precedents to the exclusion of common sense led him to attach to them a peculiar sanctity of the most binding force. After this manner is the complete bureaucrat fashioned. The last stage is reached when he comes to attach to his own utterances *ex cathedra*—from his office chair—the same sanctity with which he had vested the decisions of his predecessors. He may be then said to be fairly in the grip of *encephalitis bureaucratICA*—official swollen head, a malady for which no known remedy exists.

Such a process is, I fancy, fairly common among 'business men' and others who have been brought into the public service in order to breathe a new and more vigorous life into it. They have been appointed as 'safe' men who will not be too violently disposed to run counter to official tradition, and official tradition has gained a complete mastery over them. No one who has not worked inside a Government office can realise how strong official tradition can be. I have heard it justified by reference to judicial doctrine. In this country at all events it is recognised as in accordance with public policy that any positive pronouncement on a question of law that has been issued from a competent Court, however disputable it may be and however much it may conflict with modern ideas, remains a binding authority on all until it has been upset by a higher Court or nullified by Act of Parliament; and the same doctrine is sometimes applied to administrative action. I have heard it seriously argued that when doubt arises as to the course to be taken on a particular occasion and it is possible to ascertain what was done on a previous occasion of a similar kind, the same course must be followed now. During the Boer War the Factory Acts were enforced with the usual rigour, so there must not be any laxity in enforcing them at the outbreak of the

Great War! I am far from saying that such a doctrine prevails in all Government offices, but forty years' experience of the Civil Service enables me to affirm with complete confidence that it is very commonly acted on even if it is not positively enunciated in some of the most important of them.

Anyone entering the Civil Service with a desire to use intelligence and common sense in the conduct of the nation's business is likely before long to come up against this hide-bound conservatism, and considerable courage and determination is required to overcome it. There are doubtless plenty of men who would be capable of doing so, but these are not, generally speaking, the men who choose the Civil Service as a career, and still less are they the men whom Ministers of State are likely to select as 'safe' men to appoint to the Service, otherwise than by competitive examination. It is possible to imagine a Civil Service carried on by a staff endowed with all the virtues with which the present staff may fairly be credited and animated into the bargain by such a courage and public spirit as would enable them to combat successfully the 'red tape' with which every bureaucracy is inevitably infested—men who would regard the public good as the main object and their own advantage as a purely secondary consideration. With such a staff in being it would be difficult to put any limit to the extent to which State Socialism might be carried profitably to the community, but those who are best acquainted with the inner working of the Civil Service as at present established will know that such an imagination is but a vain dream.

In fact, the possibility of realising such a dream is more remote than it was forty years ago when competitive examination was only beginning to leaven the Civil Service, and it was natural to look forward to a time when insistence on a high standard of intellectual capacity for all who were allowed to enter the higher branches of the Service would have completely transformed the character of public administration. Such an anticipation has certainly not been realised.

In my earlier years in the Civil Service I remember many instances of the grossest stupidity on the part of officials of the older school, but none grosser than those which their successors are from time to time perpetrating to-day; and certainly I remember nothing of jobbery which gave so unpleasant an impression as that which was described in the beginning of this article. The great advance in intellectual capacity which resulted from the

introduction of competitive examination for all candidates for permanent appointments under Government has been counter-balanced by other influences. One of these may be specially mentioned. There was a time when Ministers were accustomed freely to appoint their private secretaries to the higher posts in their departments: such appointments were natural enough. During the last forty years the stress of political life has become severer; the energies of politicians in office have been more and more engrossed in Parliamentary conflict and they have had perforce less and less time to devote to the less showy work of ordinary administration. At the same time the duties and the personnel of the Government offices have been steadily increasing, and it is inevitable that Ministers should have less direct knowledge of the staff of their departments and the work falling on them than was formerly the case. It is much rarer than it once was for the influence of a single Minister to permeate a Government office in the way we older officials experienced a generation ago. In these circumstances it is natural that a Minister should attach the highest importance to the services of an official who is not only personally devoted to his interest and can assist him in the tactics of political strife, but can also act as it were as a *liaison* officer as regards the permanent staff of his department. These are the special functions of a private secretary, and it is only natural that tact, industry and intelligence manifested in this capacity and brought daily to the notice of a hard-worked Minister should be rewarded by appointment to some more lucrative post. Hence the appointment of private secretaries to be permanent heads of departments. Such appointments are probably not so common as they once were, but they have had an unquestionable effect on the public service; the permanent officials have learnt a lesson. No change in the Civil Service during the forty years I have known it is, I think, so marked as this, that among the higher officials the spirit of the private secretary has more and more superseded the spirit of the administrator. More and more have the permanent heads of departments put the personal interests of their parliamentary chiefs above the more general interests of the administrative efficiency of their subordinate staff. Sometimes it would almost seem as though they no longer regard themselves as the servants of the public, and forget that as permanent officials they owe a duty to the public as well as to the particular individual whom the changes and chances of politics have placed above them.

For the permanent head of a Government department absolute loyalty to his parliamentary chief and unhesitating readiness to carry out his decisions, are of course indispensable as for other Government servants, but the public may reasonably require something more than this from him. A private secretary's energies may be wholly devoted to making his chief's path as easy as circumstances permit, seeing that when a decision has to be arrived at, all relevant facts are put carefully, clearly and succinctly before him and saving him all unnecessary trouble, but something more than this is reasonably required from more responsible officials, and to the present writer it seems that the something more is too often lacking. More frequently than was formerly the case, the permanent head is little more than a glorified private secretary, and the effect which such a falling off inevitably has on the subordinate staff more than counterbalances the increased intellectual vigour which the introduction of competitive examination has undoubtedly produced.

Further, the immense increase in the Civil Service has made it far more difficult than it once was for the watch-dogs of the Treasury to exercise an effective control over it. I remember myself discussing with a high Treasury authority a proposed departmental reorganisation which had been submitted to the Treasury for approval. From a fairly intimate knowledge of the facts I believed the proposals made involved a much heavier charge on the Exchequer than was warranted by their ostensible object, and I suspected that the real object was to create a well-paid post for a favoured subordinate—a suspicion which, I may add, was strengthened by subsequent experience. I suggested accordingly that the Treasury should institute a special enquiry into the needs of the department from which the proposals emanated and offered in that event to give evidence in support of my opinion. I was told that this was out of the question—if the responsible head of the department said that the proposed addition to his staff was necessary to effect the desired end it was practically impossible for the Treasury to go behind his dictum. At the time this seemed to me a preposterously timid attitude for a high Treasury official to adopt, but it must be acknowledged that in view of the intricate and complicated machinery by which the business of the nation is now conducted, it is a task of immense difficulty for a Treasury official to determine what staff is necessary in each of the Government offices for carrying on its particular work satisfactorily.

To me it does not seem possible, either through the agency of the Treasury or the introduction of fresh blood or through any other means that has yet been suggested, to improve the quality of the machinery by which the affairs of the nation are at present administered—it will be much if in spite of adverse influences deterioration can be prevented. Moreover, *esprit de corps* has undoubtedly grown stronger in the Civil Service since the days when the writer joined ; there is more feeling of solidarity between the various departments—and beneficial as this growth of solidarity in the Service may be in some respects, it inevitably makes it more difficult for a Treasury official to introduce reforms into other offices or resist the claims of his colleagues for additional staff or a higher rate of pay.

If then the existing English Civil Service is as good a specimen of a bureaucracy as the conditions of human nature allow of, the question whether the services on which the very life of the nation depends—the railways, the coal-mines, the farms and the factories—should be brought more fully under its control can surely admit no answer but one in the negative.

EMERITUS.

*FAREWELL, PSYCHE.*

BY E. L. GRANT WATSON.

A PHILOSOPHER has remarked, that only in our transition periods do we feel in their acuter forms happiness and unhappiness. This was the experience of William Adam, who had so long been 'down and out' that the disabilities of life no longer pressed on him with their earlier humiliation. Now that he had reached the bottom of the social scale, the dead-level of his existence was not so provocative of pain as the abrupt falls which had brought him there. Yet the thought rankled that he, who was a man of culture, should be reduced to grinding from an organ vulgar and monotonous sounds. He saw the greatness of his fall, and with an ironic smile was surprised how easily life could find consolation amongst the ruins; for despite the bleakness of his larger fate, Fortune still gave small gifts to freshen and encourage his heart, which at fifty was growing a little tired. It was an astonishing piece of good luck that the proprietor of the mews in Pimlico, which bears that old-fashioned and romantic name, 'The Heart's Desire,' should have allowed him the free use of the loose-box at the farthest end for himself, his organ and his monkey.

In past times horses had been stabled in the mews, but now on either side of the court were rows of lock-up garages, and the hay-lofts above had been enlarged by a speculative builder, and converted into studio-flats, which had been readily rented by artists of the poorer sort. Only the loose-box at the far end had not been convenient for the housing of a car, and the proprietor, a kind-hearted man, had allowed William Adam to use it as a temporary refuge.

Elizabeth was the name of Mr. Adam's diminutive monkey, and she was, so at least he thought, an unusual and altogether superior monkey for any organ-grinder to possess. She was of the kind known to science as a Brown Capuchin. She was small and active, with a woolly brown head, with rounded ears, like the most delicate of sea-shells, and with intelligent eyes, which had in them a quick blending of enquiry and pathos. But her most



remarkable feature was her tail. It had a spiral curve like a watch spring, which did not vulgarly curl upwards, as any cur-dog's might have done, but curved downwards and inwards with concentrated and prehensile strength. Even to an unprejudiced eye she must have passed as a pleasant little monkey, but to Will Adam, who had so little else, the thought of her had grown the warmest thought left in life.

Elizabeth had only the faintest memory of her youth. Somewhere, in some other world, so it seemed, she had clung to the furry, pleasant-smelling breast of her mother, and had been swept along through the swaying branches of tree-tops. Patches of brilliant sky had sometimes flashed on her vision, and then her mother had plunged downward, bearing her into a green underworld of moisture and stillness, only to rise again up the long, swaying creepers into the sun-illuminated tree-tops. Such were her earliest and most definite recollections, and what had followed had seemed so strange and haphazard that Elizabeth had never clearly distinguished the sequence of events. Men, the first men she had ever seen, had put her into a box. Oh, she had seen the insides of so many boxes! She had been given strange food, and men, smelling of tobacco and sweat, had taken her out, and handled her, and put her back again. And then more men and more boxes, and at last she had woken from that dream-life to the present, and to the personality of William Adam. She had grown well accustomed to the smell of Will Adam, and knew it, at first sniff, from the smells of other men. She had also grown quite accustomed to the organ, which he trundled up and down the streets, and her æsthetic senses were not so far developed as to resent the blatancy of its tunes.

Whether he were pushing at the shafts or turning the handle, William had a melancholy expression, as though he were remembering that once he had aspired to be a literary man, and from that high hope had fallen to be a schoolmaster, and from that, by the inevitable weight of his depression, to be what he now was. And while he turned the handle he watched with that habitual look of melancholy, touched by an ironic fatalism, the small Elizabeth as she pretended to be hunting for fleas, or as she walked up and down on the organ with her wonderful tail arched behind her. How round and brown her head, how delicate her ears! And what delicious bird-like little noises she uttered! Listening to them, Adam could imagine himself far away and lost

in South American jungles. How naïve and charming she appeared to his too-partial admiration! With what enviable unconcern could she nibble at her belly, regardless of a gazing crowd. And then, when sometimes she would seem to lose interest in her simple toilet, and with her queer intelligent eyes sit and watch him, seeming to forget the streets and the houses and the people, then he would turn the handle a little quicker, and though he was well aware that the spark of her understanding was always, despite appearances, centred on her own interests, he would wilfully imagine that it was lit with sympathy for his life's disappointment.

William disliked his profession, and most of all he disliked playing in front of the houses of cultured people who shared his own aversion for vulgar tunes. With a pained expression on his face, he would play five tunes in quick succession, and if the people in the houses did not come out during that time with the twopence or threepence, and the request that he should move on, then he would, of his own accord, go shamefully away, regretting that he had troubled both himself and them for nothing. But there were brighter occasions, when at the sound of the first notes, a maid-servant would appear with a sixpence and a request that he would go away and not come back again. With a smile and a touching of the cap, he would take the coin and hand it to Elizabeth, who would bite on it with her large canine teeth, and hand it back to him; and then he would trundle the organ a block farther, glad of the sixpence, but still ashamed that he must bow to so uncongenial a fate.

The winter of 1930 was a hard time for William and Elizabeth. Money was scarce and William went often hungry. At night-time, in the loose-box, he would share the food that his pennies had bought with his little partner, and Elizabeth, who made no attempt to conceal her greediness, would stretch out her brown, tapering hands and snatch at what she liked best. William would seldom refuse her, and so it was that Elizabeth, who was small, had the best of what was going, and William, who was so much larger, had what was left over, and this was seldom enough. And though William was often cold of nights, Elizabeth was never cold once she had crept inside his coat, and had settled, in her habitual resting-place, over his heart.

But in the spring came a change, which at first seemed all for the best. Into one of the studio-flats on the opposite side of the mews, there moved with her easels and paint-boxes a charming

young lady. Her name was Miss Psyche Merrilees, and she was young and debonair. She dressed in the latest of Chelsea fashions, and in the spring sunshine looked as bright and happy as any flower, in a yellow hat, and an apple-green silk dress that did not too demurely hide the apple curves of her young breasts. It was not long after Psyche had moved in that she discovered that she was in need of a charwoman to do her tidying, and since charwomen were scarce in the neighbourhood of 'Heart's Desire,' she made an arrangement with Will Adam to come every morning and do some work for her. Such a task might have seemed derogatory to a graduate of one of our greater universities, but to an organ-grinder it offered regular money, the wherewithal to feed a starving body.

At all times Adam had had an eye for women, and, had fortune favoured him a little more, would have had hands and arms for them too, but now at fifty, with no money and very little personal conceit, he was not so foolish as to let grow the faintest hope that Psyche might ever see him as other than the world had made him—but yet his thoughts sometimes strayed, do what he could to hold them within the bounds of sense and probability.

The daily contact became both a pleasure and a pain—a pleasure to see her and hear her musical young voice, and a pain to know that only as a poor male makeshift for a charwoman could he enter into her life. And soon came other pains, though pleasures did not grow proportionately. Miss Psyche had a large number of friends and admirers, and these were mostly young men of a type which Adam could not approve. Handsome, curly-haired, clean-limbed, they were young, with money in their pockets, and warm blood in their veins, and how he disliked them! Yet he was reasonable enough to know the unreasonable origin of his dislike. Were not the young made for the young? And even if the rumour were true, that Psyche's sense of freedom in the matter of morals was as modern as her clothes, what concern of his was that?

In his ironic mood, which was his defence against the world, he nicknamed these gay young men, whose untested youth placed them so far above him, 'The sons of God,' for did they not, in all their acts, and even in their bearing, deem to presume that the world was made for them? He smiled at his own poor wit, and did not forget that in modern, as in ancient times, the sons of God were only too reasonably apt to visit the daughters of men. For their youth, the beauty of Psyche, and for himself the menial

task! And so it was that he fed on what consolation philosophy could give, as on the morning after the party he swept up the scattered cigarette-ends and washed out the empty glasses.

But worse was to come. Miss Psyche, besides wielding her spell over the hearts of youthful admirers, ensnared, with the gifts they gave her, the wayward senses of Elizabeth.

'What a delightful little monkey,' she exclaimed on first seeing Elizabeth. 'And what a perfectly beautiful, beautiful tail. Do let me stroke it. It looks so soft, but oh, how stiff it is, and so strong!' And she laughed and blushed with pleasure, and then with a momentary apprehension, for she had picked Elizabeth up, 'He won't bite, will he?' she asked, with that annoying feminine disregard for the sex of lower animals.

'No, she won't bite. But she is not accustomed to being nursed by ladies. Let her run, and do as she likes, you will see her better that way.'

Miss Merrilees watched the monkey with evident delight. 'Do you think he would like chocolates?' she suggested.

'She hasn't much experience of that sort of food,' said Adam, who had never been able to afford her luxuries more expensive than monkey-nuts.

'Wait and I'll get him some'; and Miss Psyche ran trippingly upstairs. In a few moments she returned with a chocolate box. 'Here, monkey,' she called, and she held out a chocolate.

Elizabeth cautiously put out her little hand, took the proffered sweetmeat, turned it over, smelt it, tasted it. She seemed for a moment to be holding inner commune with herself. She decided that it was very good, and with relish consumed it. Then with perfect assurance she walked to where Psyche was sitting, climbed into her lap, and held out her hand for more.

'Oh, he likes them. I thought he would!' cried the delighted girl. 'You dear little monkey. . . . There, take what you like!' And she held out the box.

Elizabeth took another and another. She did not snatch nor eat hurriedly, but with an unpausing and convinced determination. Once she chattered a few musical notes, a hymn of praise for such fair fortune, and then she turned her eyes on William, and it seemed to his sensitive imagination that her glance was saying: 'Why did *you* never let me know that such beautiful things existed in the world? Why have you fed me only on dry crusts, withered apples and half-rotten bananas?' And because he could not

answer her and say : ' I have shared my last crust with you—have given you the best and kept the worst for myself—I have given you warmth while I have shivered, and I have loved you with all the power of love which is left to a man who has renounced the happiness of youth '—because he could not say these shamefaced truths, he felt a bitterness toward that pretty girl, who was watching his monkey with such evident delight. And at the same time another, subtler, smaller pain had also entered his heart. Psyche, though she had offered Elizabeth all the chocolates in the box, had not thought to offer him a single one. Not that he was particularly fond of chocolates, though indeed he would have gladly accepted. But no ! And in bitterness he thought : ' Such things are well enough for girls and apes,' and in that thought he put the symbols of his love and admiration in opposition to himself and poverty.

This incident, which was marked for Adam with a new pain and a new consciousness, was the beginning of the defection of Elizabeth. Each day that Adam went to do his charring in Psyche's flat, she would ask him for the monkey, and would feed her on dainties that her affluence could afford ; and how greedily Elizabeth looked for and devoured that unwholesome food. Adam noticed that her condition was not so good as it had been : a suspicion of mange had appeared at the back of her neck ; her temper was also shorter, and one day, when justly corrected, she turned and bit his thumb. But not yet had he perceived the full strength of the influence which the young artist exercised on his beloved pet.

One night after Adam had extinguished his solitary candle, and had lain down on his bed of straw, he was surprised to see Psyche come through the stable door, carrying a small hand-lamp to light her way. As she approached, she held this lamp above her head, that it might throw its light in all directions ; and this position, in its romantic association, seemed to Adam to show her to very good advantage.

' I am so sorry if I am disturbing you,' she began, ' but I have come to ask whether I might borrow your monkey for a short time to show him to some friends.'

This demand was so unexpected, and as Adam had been dozing a little, the apparition of Psyche, so striking and elegant in her evening dress, that he hesitated, off his guard, not able to foresee whither such a request might lead. And then, because he had hesitated, he thought it was too late to refuse.

'I only want him for a short time,' said Psyche sweetly. 'I'll bring him back quite soon, and take the greatest care of him—and please, Mr. Adam,' she added with a becoming embarrassment, 'as he's your monkey, let me leave sixpence for his earnings. I'm sure his time is worth at least that.' She laid a sixpence on the top of the organ.

'I don't want your money,' said Adam.

'Oh please, you must take it.'

Elizabeth had come out from her resting-place, and Psyche, who had some kind of sweetmeat in her hand, was tempting her. 'May I take him?' she asked.

Adam, who would have liked to refuse had he known how, shrugged his shoulders, and with this ungracious gesture gave a tacit assent.

After they had gone he regretted his weakness, and the laughter, which a little later came from the flat opposite, sounded vacant in his ears. What were they doing with her there? Making a fool of her no doubt! And with a rising bitterness, he remembered the time when he had envied those laughing young men their easy equality with Psyche; in his wishes, he had then been the interloper, longing to claim the prerogative of youth; and now youth with its ruthless egotism was invading his poor domain.

Elizabeth was not returned till the next morning, when Psyche excused herself by saying that she had not wished again to disturb Mr. Adam so late. Despite his annoyance with her, Adam could not but think that she looked particularly flushed and happy that morning, and though he had meant to remonstrate, he felt, in face of her beauty and freshness, a sullen fellow to make objection to what, after all, was but a trifle.

'We had such fun,' she told him. 'I gave the monkey a dancing lesson; and do you know, he's ever so quick at picking things up. Let me teach him to dance, and he'll be worth ever so much more to you as an organ monkey.'

Adam smiled, as it seemed only polite that he should in response to the bright sparkling of her eyes. 'I like her well enough as she is,' he said.

'But he has such talent—you ought to develop it,' said Psyche.

'Elizabeth will be happier left as she was born,' he answered, and as he spoke, felt all the conviction of his broken life behind the words.

For that time, Psyche said no more, but she did not give up



her project. It was such fun, in the gay company of her friends, to tempt the monkey with sweetmeats, and to the accompaniment of a slow tune, make her step in time to the notes. And so what had happened once, she found could easily happen again, and often, after that first decisive occasion, she came to borrow Mr. Adam's monkey, and Adam, who had found it hard to refuse, again and again submitted, though against his will. He often slept alone with no other company than the hand-organ, and Elizabeth, who returned to him in the morning, seemed to say with her intelligent eyes: 'Well, here I am . . . same as I have always been. . . . What next?' He would tell himself she was only a monkey and not human, yet for that very reason he would love her the more.

Thus the weeks and the months passed, till one night about midsummer, William, on his lonely straw couch, woke to the realisation that his monkey was being stolen from him. Because he was long-suffering and blind, he was about to lose her; and in his weakness he was stirred to bitter resentment. He thought of Psyche, so blonde, so debonair, and so free with her money, and he cursed her. Jezebel, he called her, and Delilah, and still muttering, seemed at a loss, until the words Will-of-the-wisp were framed on his lips. Will-of-the-wisp, he repeated, and springing up from the straw on the floor of the loose-box, he ran out into the warm summer night.

From the studio came laughter and the sound of someone strumming on the piano. William Adam clenched his fists and ran up the steps; but at the top he paused.

No, that would never do; by violence he would only make a fool of himself. Slowly he came down, and as he stepped again into the court, he shrugged his shoulders, and the caustic manner, which for so long had been his shield against the world, returned to him. For a time he stood in thought, then he went back to the loose-box, put together his few belongings, slung them over the shafts, and pushed his organ out into the yard. Opposite the studio he paused and began to turn the handle. The familiar tune sounded very loud in the night, and he had played only a few bars when the face of Psyche appeared at the studio window.

'Why, it's Will Adam,' she exclaimed. 'What are you doing, Mr. Adam, playing at this time of night?'

'Too fine a night for sleep,' he answered her, dissembling. 'Let my monkey come down and show how she can dance.'

'What a fellow you are for surprises, to be sure,' laughed Psyche. 'Who would have thought it of you?'

In a few moments she had run down the steps. 'Here he is,' she said.

'Put her on the organ, and let her dance,' directed Adam. But as soon as he had his hand on Elizabeth's back the tune stopped, and he said: 'And now good-bye, Miss Psyche. We are going away,' and he picked up the shafts.

'But at this time of night? What do you mean? Going away?' she said, astonished.

'Tis none too soon,' he said.

'But where to?'

'A long way from here,' and buttoning Elizabeth inside his coat, he began to push the organ over the cobbles of the yard.

'But, Mr. Adam,' she called after him. 'Mr. Adam, I owe you money for the work you've done. . . .'

He did not heed her, but as he pushed on as fast as his strength would allow, he was surprised to hear her laugh. He did not look back; but once again, as though it were a farewell, mocking caress, he heard, at a further distance, her clear, ringing, girlish laugh.

When he reached the open street, he slackened his pace a little, for he was out of breath, and his heart was beating fast with the unwonted excitement. He had saved his monkey, his dear little Elizabeth, but lost his home, his safety, and with an unexpected pang, he knew that he had lost Psyche too, and for ever. How provoking of her to laugh, but how much in character, and how attractive! Yes, she was a very seductive woman, and no doubt about that!

Through the empty streets from Pimlico to Chelsea, and on to Kensington, he pushed his organ. From Kensington to Notting Hill, and thence to Paddington, he went to the echo of his footfalls. And here, because he was too tired to go any farther, he turned into one of the alley-ways at the back of the Great Western Station. Again fortune in her small way seemed to favour him, for here were sheds, some with wood and some with scrap-iron in them; on the planks it might be possible to stretch out and get a few hours' rest. Pushing his organ as far into the shed as he could, he looked about for a place where he could settle for the night. Elizabeth, who had sat shivering on the organ while he was making his preparations for rest, came readily to his call; and then, while

he stroked her, caressing her small round head, he talked to her, as sentimental men will sometimes talk to the inferior animals. In vindication of his action, he told her how he did not regret all that he had lost, and opening his coat showed her the way to the place where she had so often found shelter. Elizabeth did not hesitate, but with the naïve acceptance of any warm or comfortable thing that life offered, she pushed her little round head against his breast, and in a few moments, nestling against him, fell asleep.

She slept and dreamed. But she did not dream either of the penury of Adam, nor of the comparative affluence of Psyche, but of tree-tops in a tropical forest, where she swung, five yards at a leap, with others of her kind, where she swung and caught at distant branches with her strong and flexible tail, and then sat perched and chattering, till, with her companions, she rushed on again, through tossing foliage, where large-beaked toucans flashed in blue and gold. And sometimes in delicious fantasy, as though half-flying, she fell from those high tree-tops through the still under-air, till, near the ground, snatching at a branch, she swayed and swung again; and then with swift, sure movements climbed once more up, up through the dark forest toward the flower-carpet of the tree-tops, where jewel-winged humming-birds hovered, like moths above the blossoms—up, up towards the sun.

### IN CUBA TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

I AM acutely aware that the pages which follow chronicle nothing but the smallest of beer, but recent events in Cuba have lent them a certain topicality. Also, of the party of four whose adventures are narrated, one was afterwards a great man, and all but the writer are dead.

In August, 1906, a merry party of about a dozen left Avonmouth for Jamaica, intending, after a fortnight there, to sail north, and pay a flying visit to the eastern parts of Canada. After a week in Jamaica, four of us decided to spend a few days in Cuba, rejoining the rest of the party in New York.

Accordingly, we divided our forces, my three companions being F. E. Smith, afterwards Lord Birkenhead, his brother Harold, and Norman Chamberlain, who had been at Eton with me, and, like me, had just come down from Magdalen. After some years of noble social service in his family city, Birmingham, he gave his life for his country in 1917.

We arrived at Santiago shortly before lunch, the day after leaving Kingston, and proceeded to the best hotel. Unfortunately, while in Jamaica, I had indulged too freely in stewed guavas. Nemesis overtook me at lunch, and I had to retire to my bedroom, which was on the ground floor. Here I remained, prostrate on my bed, till dinner-time, when, feeling better, I rejoined my companions. But half-way through the meal, Nemesis again asserted herself, in the shape of really excruciating internal pains. I again rushed to my bedroom, animated by one desire only—to lie down and die. Arrived in my room, I found the whole place alive with cockroaches, yes, real cockroaches, but about six inches long. They had even invaded my suitcase. So there was nothing for it but to change my quarters to an upper chamber, and here at last I found rest.

The next morning I was completely restored to health, and we departed for a town in the interior called Camaguey. It was a beautiful Sunday morning, and whenever the train stopped we could hear church bells calling the peaceful villagers to prayer. Harold, rather a sentimental soul, was much moved, and said

that it really was just like Old England to hear those bells. But after some time two things struck me : the bell's tone never varied, and, as the morning wore on, the times of the services seemed to vary strangely. So the next time the train stopped, I got out to stretch my legs, and the mystery was quickly solved. The bell was hung on the front of the engine, and rung continuously during every halt, to hasten would-be passengers.

We occupied a car at the rear end of the train, open to the sky, and containing nothing save our four chairs, and our luggage. I should add that we were travelling light, with only one suitcase apiece. When lunch-time came, the train stopped at a station, and we all got out to eat an excellent meal in the refreshment room, affably presided over by the American conductor. Shortly before, something in the landscape had attracted my attention, and I had used my field-glasses to look at it. At lunch-time I left them, in their case, on my chair. On my return, wanting my chair, I lifted the case. It seemed suspiciously light. It was, of course, empty. During lunch, while the conductor had been so charming, the peaceful villagers had gone through the train seeking what they would devour. And they had devoured my glasses. If anyone who reads this should contemplate a tour through Cuba, let him arm himself with a small, but very poisonous, snake, and leave it in the case of his glasses at lunch-time, retaining the glasses himself.

By the time that I had discovered my loss, the train was already in motion, and there was nothing to be done. At about three o'clock we arrived at Camaguey, and took up our quarters in a really delightful hotel, formerly a monastery, if I remember aright. It was all on the ground floor, and built round a shady courtyard.

The next day, about noon, in broiling heat, we were strolling through the town, when we came upon a rather curious sight. There was a tall and obviously very important telegraph pole, plainly a sort of junction-pole. A man had climbed this, presumably to effect some repairs, and had there gone fast asleep, and was to be seen sitting on a cross-bar, with the main pole between his legs, and his arms flung over another cross-bar. There he was, fully sixty feet up, blissfully unconscious of all about him. Some twenty minutes later, we passed that way again. The man had gone. There were no signs on the pavement, so we hoped for the best.

We left Camaguey that afternoon, for Havana. As usual in those

days, a revolution was raging in Cuba, and, as our train had to pass through country occupied by the revolutionary forces, some Civil Guards were attached to it. But as soon as we approached the enemy's country, these, with admirable prudence, decamped, and left us to our fate. It was a corridor train, but again without a restaurant car, so that we had to get out and have dinner at a station. We had been playing bridge, for which purpose two suitcases, one on top of the other, made an excellent table. My suitcase, being nice and flat, was one of the two. Norman was determined to prove wiser than I, so had hidden his field-glasses safely in his suitcase, which, not being one of those required for bridge, he put in the rack. Shortly after our return from dinner, night having fallen, and the train being once more in motion, we discovered that poor Norman's suitcase had disappeared. All he had, in fact, was the no longer very clean duck suit that he stood up in. Poor Norman! Even his more than angelic temper was rather badly strained.

Well, as there was nothing to be done, we settled down to bridge. After some time, I made a rather rash No-trump call, and found myself with a hand to play which demanded all my concentration. The train stopped (as we supposed at some station) and we vaguely saw some people passing down the corridor. As already explained, I was far too busy to notice anything. Shortly afterwards, the train moved on again, and we then learned that the people passing down the corridor were the revolutionaries, who had stopped the train, and, finding no one on board whom they wanted to kidnap or to murder, had let it proceed again. But can anything be imagined more humiliating than to be held up without knowing it?

Soon after we had learned of our escape, F. E. began to make up a beautiful story about it. It finally developed somewhat as follows: 'We were in the utmost peril. Bullets were flying through the carriage from either side. Splinters of glass and woodwork were flying in every direction. Henry Lygon was never very brave. He called out to me: "Duck, F. E., Duck: for Heaven's sake, Duck——" I answered: "No, Henry, no. An Englishman dies, but he does not duck."'

Some years later, my turn came. I had to propose F. E.'s health at a political dinner. 'You, gentlemen, only know our guest as the rising hope of the Tory party. It is my good fortune to know him as a hero.'



Well, we finally reached Havana that night, and found an hotel of which my recollections are blissful. My room was at the very top, and I had a tiled bath, practically open to the elements. With a bottle of the cheap local Eau de Cologne emptied into it, it was perfection. But I got one bad fright there. I was luxuriating one morning when a terrific cannonade broke out. I thought, of course, that the rebel forces were advancing on the city, and that we should all be butchered. Not at all. It was only Mr. Taft arriving to pacify the island, and being saluted by all the guns available.

The day of our arrival, we had, of course, to try to rig poor Norman out. Sponges and razors presented no difficulty. But what about clothes? Our stay was too short to allow of any clothes being made, and, for some reason or other, no reach-me-downs were available. So there was nothing for it. Norman had to go on wearing that less and less clean duck suit.

We met with two pieces of bad luck at Havana. Prior to our arrival, the rebel forces had been encamped a mile or two from the town, and the fashionable way of spending the afternoon had been to take the tram, and go out to tea with the rebels. But they had struck their camp two days before we arrived, so this was no longer possible.

Another check was that the President of the Republic refused to receive us. Why he should have done so, or why we should have wanted him to, Heaven only knows, but the fact remains. We sent in a request, and while we were awaiting the answer, we were accosted by the reporter of a local paper, published in American. F. E., who then, let it be remembered, had been in Parliament about six months, took him on one side. What he told the reporter will never be known, but the headlines next day were: 'Mr. F. E. Smith, M.P., English Conservative Leader, and Joseph Chamberlain's Nephew Arrive in Havana. Exciting Journey.'

F. E. was armed with a letter of introduction to Señor Bock. The old gentleman received us most genially, and showed us round his cigar factory. Here we saw a very curious sight. An enormous L-shaped room, with nearly a thousand people busily at work. In a rostrum at the apex of the L, a man was reading aloud. In the morning, if I remember rightly, he read the newspaper, and in the afternoon a history book. The workers, both men and women, whose work of course was quite noiseless, listened with the closest attention, having each made some tiny contribution towards the reader's pay. Any interruption was much resented, and if you

ventured to speak above a whisper, you were promptly 'hush'-ed down. In a fairly extensive political experience, I have never encountered anyone with such vocal powers as those readers. I do not believe that even my lamented friend Will Crooks could have competed with them. It must have been a very wearing life.

Getting from Havana to New York presented some difficulty. Beside the revolution, there was yellow fever in Cuba, with the result that all the liners were crammed, and first-class prices had to be paid for third-class accommodation. Furthermore, yellow fever involved a week's quarantine, and, as the liners did the trip in, I think, three days, there was the prospect of an unpleasant and expensive sojourn on Ellis Island. Also, our money was running rather short, so we decided, if possible, to go by a tramp steamer, which would take about a week, and thus get over the quarantine difficulty.

There was such a tramp in Havana harbour at the moment. We determined to board her, and to try our luck. For this, a rowing-boat must be found. We found one, whose presiding genius was the most typical Dago mariner imaginable, earrings and all complete. He seemed to have no English. None of us had any Spanish. However, somehow we managed to make him understand what we wanted and off we went, past the sunken *Maine* to interview the skipper of the tramp. F. E. was idly trailing his hand in the water, a very dangerous proceeding in that shark-infested harbour. Suddenly our Dago looked up and saw him. 'Gawblimey, Charlie, don't do that,' he exclaimed. It then transpired that he had spent some months in Wapping, and possessed a really surprising command of the vernacular.

Well, we saw our skipper, who was starting for New York the next day, and agreed to take us. But before we left Havana, there was one formality to go through. Everyone leaving the country had to be examined for symptoms of the dreaded yellow fever. So off we went to the appropriate office. The first symptoms of this disease are, I believe, to be found in the eyes, so our eyelids were duly turned up, and our eyeballs examined. All my life my eyes have been very sensitive to strong light, dust, etc. After several weeks of burning sun, and of light reflected from the sea, I was suffering mildly from chronic conjunctivitis. The official duly turned up one of my eyelids, and looked at my eyeball for a moment in amazement. Then he called to his colleague: 'Here, Bill, come and look at this,' propping my eyelid back the while

with the blunt end of a pen. My feelings may be more easily imagined than described. We all four made sure that I had got yellow fever. In addition to alarm, I was also suffering acute discomfort from the blunt end of the pen. However, when Bill had duly inspected me, it was explained that it was only my conjunctivitis that had excited wonder, and all was well. But it was one of the nastiest moments of my life.

We left Havana the next day, in the good ship—no, I won't tell her name, for she was not really a very good ship, but the officers were most kind. The ship was a tramp of some 1,600 tons, and had not a shilling's worth of cargo. The captain, much impressed at having a M.P. on board, had insisted on resigning his cabin to F. E. Harold had another separate cabin, and Norman and I shared one, I, as the senior, having the upper berth. From the moment that we crossed the bar at Havana till we reached Sandy Hook, we were broadside on to the Atlantic rollers, at the time of the equinox, and without any cargo whatsoever, if we except certain little companions which the Captain left in his berth for F. E. The ship rolled. Let us leave it at that.

I was compelled to wedge myself into my upper berth with books and boots, to avoid being pitched out. We were frequently flung out of our chairs on deck, but still we managed to play bridge, and it was all great fun. One particular I remember vividly. At the beginning of the voyage, there was a noble pat of butter on the dinner-table, flanked with ice. As time went on the pat naturally grew less, and the ice gave out, so that all that remained in the butter-dish was an oily substance that swayed to and fro with the motion of the ship. In time, most of it seemed to have got on to the second officer's beard, which shone in the lamplight.

But we reached New York at last, and Norman was able to clothe himself again from his heavy luggage, which the rest of the party had brought on from Jamaica. Dear Norman was never a very dressy person, and what he looked like during the last few days of that one duck suit can hardly be described.

My account ought properly to end here, but there is one detail more. For some reason the rest of the party had been unable to get F. E.'s heavy luggage through the customs, so for the whole of one afternoon in late September, he was compelled to stalk about New York in a suit of tussore silk. But nothing could damp his spirits, nor impair his dignity, and that figure remains a priceless memory.

HENRY LYGON.

*PAN IN THE TREE-TOPS.*

WEARIED of clumsy goat-hooves, Pan arose ;  
 He skipped to Circe's Isle, besought her change  
 His uncouth body. Dropped his curving horns ;  
 Coarse goat-hairs moulted ; acrid scent dissolved :  
 Instead grew pelt of russet ; for his horns  
 A pair of little cunning cocked-up ears ;  
 Eyes, lewd and leering, melted, dark and mild.  
 She gave him claws for hoofs ; a brushwood tail  
 Curled shadow-fashion over rounded back.  
 He shook himself and blinked. A glassy pool  
 Mirrored a pygmy Pan, a lissom sprite.  
 No more he shambled ; sprang on sinewy legs,  
 Saw a smooth pine-bole, red and raw from showers ;  
 Leapt, scampered up it, claws dug deep in bark,  
 With muscles rippling down his sinewy back,  
 Like winds a-ruffle over tawny fern :  
 Snatched at a cone, sat hunched upon a branch,  
 Blew, (minding Pan-pipes held to goatish lips),  
 Nibbled and scattered scales. Then suddenly  
 Started and frisked, and leapt from twig to twig,  
 (What fun for Pan, earth-free, to cling and climb !)  
 Swung pendulous at dizzy heights, and chased  
 —A mad arboreal kitten—after leaves  
 That naughty winds had driven scurry-mad.

Pan's pipes are silent now, amid the trees ;  
 But when he whisks his besom tail, and scolds,  
 Rogue-eyes a-twinkle, squirrel still is Pan.

E. W. HENDY.

## HABBAKUK: A TRUE BIOGRAPHY

*Où sont les gracieux gallans,  
Que je suivoye en temps jadis,  
Si bien chantans, si bien parlans,  
Si plaisans en faiz et en dis?*

HABBAKUK was my friend. No man can guess his wild and ancient forest ancestry, none was present at his seedling birth, and even I, his master, lay never in his shade during that long and lazy saplinghood on the lush banks of the Cerne stream. Yet all these things I learned from him and now know.

It was a Good Friday when I first found Habbakuk—a Good Friday of wind and flying ragged clouds, of gusts of rain and racing patches of clean, fresh sunshine. I had marched long and far, wet and sun-dried alternately. And in the mellowness of the quietened evening I came slowly down over the smooth round curve of the Dorset wolds into the valley. On the right up the hillside straddled the pagan whiteness of the Cerne Giant, and under the great heel cut deep in chalk by men whose terror of this forgotten god quivered through the ages before history, my tiny figure cowered and crept down towards the curling smoke and warm thatched roofs of Cerne Abbas. Very tired, I slipped foolishly on the slithery slope of wet chalk.

Then it was that I saw him. A great pile of ash staves lay stacked neatly under the hawthorn hedge, and from among them, like a racehorse in a farm stables, Habbakuk leapt suddenly to my eye. They were all weather-beaten to strength and, burly or slim, crooked or straight, all had the stout wooden hearts of staves who know that the spring and temper of their forefathers shot the arrows that won Crecy and Poitiers. But Habbakuk was beautiful. Tall and true and strong, with scarcely a knotch save where the thickening haft invited the grip of a friendly hand, he stuck the length of a new year's shoot beyond his fellows. I dragged him out. Farmers have no eye for pedigree, and blood must have its chance.

A full five feet he was, with a deep cleft at the top into which the pilgrim's thumb slipped as snugly as hand in glove. He quivered a little as I took him, for he still barely knew the mastership of

men, and strained now into the good rich earth, as one who would say :

'I am of the sap of the great trees that covered the Weald before man. This earth is my home. Of my free will alone I choose my own master.'

Thus I became Habbakuk's master, and he my friend. With a great jack-knife that has cut bread and cheese in a dozen countries, whittled wooden toys on the South Downs, hacked ice-steps in the Pyrenees, and killed a mad dog in Andalusia, I trimmed his butt in the gathering dusk. From that moment we were blood brothers.

As we came down the last mile of wet lane, past the first cottages with the warm orange welcome of their lit windows in the blue, my fatigue was gone. Habbakuk bit into the chalk, bore me up, and swung me on again. My right hand fitted snugly round his great handle and slipped easily, when need was, down the smooth bark. Habbakuk helped me ; yet all the while he still held back from me with the hidden reserve and latent strength of a shy wild thing.

So we gained the leaning grey houses of the black high street, streaked pleasantly with flung strips of yellow oil-light. I remember a gabled inn, a steaming savoury meal, mellow ale, the round burr of somnolent Dorset conversation, a great spitting log-fire in the parlour, and its red glare and dark shadows flickering upon Habbakuk as he stood in a dim corner.

It was his first night within four walls. Without the wide sky and the starlight of the old tree gods, he was a little afraid. . . .

The next morning we tramped, Habbakuk and I, and I learned to know him better. Up the valley-side and over High Stoy we went, he driving forward all the time with a strong firm stride. At first we were a little strange—I unsure of my exact hold ; he not certain of my pace and preference in paths. But soon we fell into the silent understanding of wayfarers, and within an hour or so he was swinging in my hand on the flat stretches with the perfect balance of a grandfather pendulum. And when we came to the open country, he it was who searched out for me the old tracks of thick fine turf, worn short by centuries of Dorset feet.

It was a still morning of smooth spring sunshine, and by midday we had covered fifteen miles and reached over the hills to the northern meadowed plain as fast friends. At a country inn, I filled a pot of rich old ale, aglow with the cool red fire born of years



within good English casks. Then, setting it down in a meadow spangled with buttercup points, I drew out a great wad of bread and cheese from my pouch, and settled to the task which now presented itself.

For two and a half hours I carved delicately in the hard, seasoned wood, with a bite and a draught at the end of every half a dozen hard-won letters. Gradually his birthplace took shape, each letter cut and fashioned carefully and hardly, limb by limb and serif by serif:

## CERNE ABBAS

—a good, round-sounding, warm-welcomed name of the Southland. As it was formed, I heard the mellow-tongued burr of the 'r' and the slow lazy drawl of the Wessex 'a' as the short-clipped Londoner has no time to savour them, and I put these things into the words with the aching of unaccustomed fingers. Then, slowly and painfully, the holy festival day upon which Habbakuk came to me:

## GOOD FRIDAY × MCMXXX

That was very long and difficult as it wound diagonally round his smooth shaft, but at length I was able to add my initials underneath as his friend and freely-chosen master, thus:

R. C.

Last of all I carved between these the sign of a little cross, as the men of Orkney to this day hack it upon the worn face of those black stones which lean together in eerie pagan circles on the barren land against a moon-wracked sky. And this I did to drive out and exorcise the wild surge of fearful forgotten things which Habbakuk inherited from his childhood under the shadow of the white Cerne Giant, and the old time when the trees were masters of the world and Pan their king.

The sun climbed slowly down the long pale sky, and my fingers were sore and bleeding a little, and the bread and cheese all eaten, and the beer gone. But at last it was done, and Habbakuk was mine.

On Easter Day I changed my plans. Westward lay Devon and Cornwall and the lost country of Lyonesse which I thought perhaps to find on a night of the new April moon. But to the north lay Glastonbury. And the Isle of Avalon is not only the place whither Queen Guinevere was brought dead to rest in good Somerset soil, and for which Patrick rightly forsook Ireland, and where now grow

the fullest, roundest, crispest, juiciest, rosiest apples in all Christendom (not excluding those of St. Martory in Ariège), but it is also the place of pilgrimage for all travellers' stocks, and cripples' crutches and wayfarers' staffs whatsoever. For here in the year 63 of our era came Joseph of Arimathea in a small boat from the East, who, winning hardly to shore, drove his staff of Syrian thorn into the Somerset earth in token of his safe coming to this far land. Whereupon, in view of all, the dry stick burst into white thorn blossom, thick and pink-tinged as the snowfields of the Jungfrau at sundown. And from that day it flowered each Christmas morning, contrary to nature, till in the seventeenth century a teetotaller, being prompted by evil spirits, cut it down with an axe. Yet still, wherever sprigs of that ancient staff are found, there is blossom on Christ's birthday to betoken the miracle.

To Glastonbury, therefore, on this sunlit Easter morning, I decided to bring Habbakuk. All day we went through the white orchards, and under the sweet-smelling hedges, and by low yellow cottages, till at last we gained the Polden Hills, and, lying down on the smooth grass of that height, saw our goal. Away behind us and towards the sea lay the lush meadows where Sedgemoor was fought, and I felt Habbakuk quiver as he remembered those others of his stock who had been among the long pike-staffs which thrust and parried and were slashed and broken all through that July day in 1685, when the Duke of Monmouth's rabble was broken and he hounded over the Mendips to be run to earth in the New Forest and afterwards executed in Whitehall. In the half-haze, one could almost imagine the grey lines of moving pike-men far below.

But before us rose Hill Weary-All, and we made the last miles leaning upon each other happily to see the roofs and towers of the city of Glastonbury coming up to us. Between the great high broken walls of the Abbey nave, grey and old and beautiful, with the deep blue vaulting of the sky above where man's roof has crumbled, I drove Habbakuk with all my strength deep into the green turf.

There was a long, long silence.

All through the long summer week-ends Habbakuk and I were inseparable companions. We walked Hampshire heath and Sussex down and Buckinghamshire beech-woods together. And all the time he was trusty and reliable as good timber can be, save only on one mad night of full moon, when, the spirit of the Cerne Giant

entering into him (it being Midsummer Eve and the carved cross notwithstanding), he joined a revel of banshees and hamadryads in a fairy ring on the Surrey hills, and I knew no more until I woke at sunrise under the third withered oak from the holy Chapel of St. Martha on the Pilgrim Way.

Yet sometimes amid all this beauty of the Southland summer, I knew him homesick for the close valley of the Cerne and the Dorset willows by the stream's side, for he would go forward with a long heavy lifeless swing as one for whom the day is sunless. But gradually his nostalgia healed, and in its stead he gained a consuming wanderlust which cast out this sadness and brought him to new places and scenes with a spring and rhythm in his gait. Just as the bows of English archers must have chafed at being hung idly by the hearthside when their owners became garrulous and pot-valiant veterans, and must have hankered again after Normandy and Guienne and the ploughing Crusader barques and the wide sunburnt plains of the Holy Land, so Habbakuk began eagerly to hear of wild and distant countries.

Together we planned future adventures. I promised to climb with him up to the bare windy pass of Soldeu, flecked with snow still in high summer, and over into the strange country of Andorra, but little changed since Charlemagne came that way with Durendal, the prince of staffs, and carved it out of the Pyrenees. I told him, too, of the enchanted beech-woods of Bakóny, which look out over the vast Hungarian plain, and at evening are still aquiver with the wild music of gypsy zither-strings. There, I said, he would come into his own again, for the Forest of Bakóny is the last province left under the sway of Pan and the tree-gods. So we schemed.

All the while I cared for Habbakuk, and trained him for long day's marches and the hard endurance of wind and rain and rock. Under my hand, his haft grew smooth and dark as the pews of Gothic oak in an English village church, and each week I bathed him in linseed oil and left him for hours in the hot sun till his shaft acquired the spring and temper of a Toledo blade. When he was three months old, I had him shod with a great iron spike half a foot long and a steel ferrule which was as carefully and lovingly made for him as ever blacksmith shod a thoroughbred. Habbakuk was a green pole no longer; he had achieved the tried and seasoned dignity of staffhood.

At last came the time when we were to undertake our first

great journey—the ancient and arduous way taken by the Bajoren kings when they led their tribes over the Alps to sack Vicenza. We should go to Munich, then up into the hills to stay for a little at the village of Oberammergau, for peace, and humbly to see the Passion Play, still acted in thankfulness for the salvation of the valley from plague three centuries ago. Then on to the city of Innsbruck, and, dallying among the sunlit mountain-pastures and hospitable villages and snow peaks of the Tirol, cross the pine-clad Brenner and down to the blue lake of Garda, Verona, the city of the Scaligers, and the sun-drenched Southern plains.

So one August day we entrained, along with a great company of friends who were to bear with us for the first stage of our journey. During that lazy companionable wandering up the Rhine and across Germany, Habbakuk had the time of his life. He was fêted, petted, played with by charming ladies, given a thousand invitations here and there for the time when he should return once more to England—though that was never to be. But though his gnarled bark softened and warmed visibly at this friendliness, yet his ashen heart and head were too firm to be turned even by the frank admiration of youth and beauty.

At Munich Habbakuk was christened. The great hall of the Hofbräuhaus was the temple of his baptism, and his christening feast was a time of full-blooded rejoicing for all the fellowship of his friends. First he was simply decked with posies of violets, large and fragrant as those amongst which he was born, from the hand of a withered old flower-crone, who, as I am now convinced, was assuredly a witch in disguise. Then he was tied about with the fair white ribbon of the Druids that his ancestors served, and at last laid out on a long scrubbed table much beringed by over-foaming quart tankards. Padres of three denominations assisted at his naming, and his godmother was a lady so beautiful that for the rest of his short life, Habbakuk, remembering the understanding eyes, the warm cheeks and smiling lips of her, never lost the half-wistful absent-mindedness of those who have seen perfect beauty and keep the picture of it in their hearts. So with due ceremony Habbakuk gained his name, and, being so plentifully splashed, soaked and drenched with the cool amber beer of Bavaria that its good hearty scent mellowed and lulled him into a rosy haze, the whole company stood and sang old songs about him till the great hall rang and resounded with the swing and din of them.

. . . . .

The next morning we were alone again, with serious business ahead. I must confess that Habbakuk was a little downcast by reaction. For the first time he had learned something foreign to his calm tree nature. He had known the jovial companionship of men and women, had come to love, and as soon to lose it . . . and besides, his head was singing and swaying most unhappily. It may have been my imagination, but I would have sworn that there was a steady throb-throb of overheated sap through the great smooth knot which lay just beneath the palm of my right hand. Habbakuk was sad in head and heart.

But the mood did not last long. The cool fresh air and still green meadows, alive with the tinkling of hidden cow-bells, soon did their work, and when we came at last up the valley and crossed the stream to the quiet chalets of Oberammergau, past the place where Caspar Schuchler broke through the cordon and brought in the plague on that summer night 300 years before, all was peace.

That night we had hospitality and rest, and the next morning, soon after sunrise, we went down to the place where the Passion Story is performed in a river meadow. All that day Habbakuk stood between my knees as the sun climbed up the sky, hovered hotly in the zenith, and slid down towards the cool green mountains in the west. Before us the Passion slowly and inevitably unfolded. When it was over Habbakuk came near to forsaking the ancient spirit of the Cerne Giant. That second night, we slept long and fast, for to-morrow our hard journey was to begin.

At dawn Habbakuk and I rose, he newly oiled and rubbed the night before. The next half-day was to bring us to the top of the world, to the apex of Europe, that peak of the Zugspitze which looks dizzily out over ten thousand square miles of mountain and valley. And that half-day was to be a long and hard one for both of us. By an ancient bus with a strange and reckless driver, we skimmed the winding hemmed-in road to Garmisch. And there our work began under a sun which, but four hours up, already bathed a shimmering world in liquid yellow heat.

Three long hard hours brought us to the glittering Eibsee, with the pines crowding down to its lapping waters to cool their parched trunks. Stripping off drenched clothes I dived into the cool indigo depths, and though he might not swim, as I plunged and splashed Habbakuk floated luxuriously upon his back and watched the endless blue sky, a deep content warming his dry sap. I half expected a great hand to come up from the dim translucence and

pluck him down to the faery kingdom, as has ever been the fate of magic staffs and swords since Excalibur vanished into the Lake. But it was not yet time for Habbakuk to go marching up into the leafy Valhalla of trees. We set off again.

Up and up and up we climbed, with liquid heat swirling from the valley below, and the tree-ringed lake gradually dwindling into more opaque blueness with each foot skywards. The pines fell away down the mountain-side and luscious green turf such as Habbakuk loved curved up towards the fawn crags. A puff of breeze broke the heat.

At midday there was a mountain shelter with thick steaming goulasch done in Hungarian fashion with scarlet paprika, and alongside a mug of icy amber beer as tall as your arm. Habbakuk leaned against the log porch, his handle buried in black shadow, his gaunt brown shaft with its knotty wooden muscles crystal clear in the mountain sunshine. He exulted in his strength and the testing of it, joyous and eager as a lover.

On we toiled once more, and still up and up through the long August afternoon towards a point immeasurably far above, where a snow-bank surmounted by an infinitesimal heap of stones gleamed vividly white against a turquoise sky. At the tip, etched on the blue as fine and tiny as by a needle, stood the summit cross.

On a sudden the meadow fell lazily behind to play with a bubbling stream and the tinkling of the cow-bells, just as the pines had done before. And now Habbakuk and I were alone with rock and sky. We leaned the more firmly on each other, man and tree allied in a lifeless, plantless world of stone. A clear wind blew across, and I was panting hard, slipping and stumbling between halts, as we came to the first snow-bank in the shaded lee of a great crag. Habbakuk was tireless, a staff of chilled steel. Soon all was snow, and the sun, climbing down the westerly sky, filled the air with white radiance.

Away to the left lay the tiny doll's house of a mountain station, dwarfed and negligible in the blue vastness of the mountain world. We were thirsty and deathly tired, but Habbakuk's steel spike gripped bravely in the crisp snow and we left the station far to the east, and set our eyes upon the cross. As we watched and climbed, it grew bigger, yet so infinitely slowly, like the moving minute hand of a watch, that the eyes grew sick with anticipation. Now all was sheer yellow rock again, with a little spurt and slither of stones



behind each footfall. Up and up we pressed, each slow weary step the panting effort of exhaustion.

Then suddenly there was no more rock, only blue sky. We were at the top of the world.

I drove Habbakuk deep into the hard ground, and threw myself down with closed eyes.

The whole world lay beneath our gaze—a world of dark peaks and snow-sheets and blue ranges, piled line against serrated line into the dim and giddy distance. North one could picture the mountains falling away to the green German lowlands, woods and fields and cities and factories stretching to the grey North Sea. Far away to the east beyond the farthest visible peaks, lay the haze of the pussta, stamped into white-hot dust by Hungarian herds; and the golden sea of the wheat-lands, waving slowly in a half-imagined breeze. Westward the knotted mountain heart of Switzerland beat between us and France; and in the south, on the other side of the rose-pink wall of granite Dolomites, lazed sun-drenched Lombardy and vines and the blue Mediterranean. Seven thousand feet below a dozen chalets and a tiny matchbox church glowed like jewels in an emerald field.

Habbakuk was drunk with it. All countries, all time and history swirled about him in the infinite stillness and silence. Left behind was his world, the world of streams and lush grass and trees, of sticky-sweet buds in spring, of cool green clouds of summer foliage, and yellow autumn leaf-shedding. Left behind, too, were men, and he, a lonely sentry of the kingdom of trees, stood above the earth, won back for Pan.

Habbakuk strained up into the sky, and was glad.

How long it was before I turned I cannot tell, but the dusk lay violet thick in the valleys, and the westward sky was washed pearl, shading away to deep cold indigo where the eastern mountains flung black clawing fingers upwards. Drunkenly I scrambled down those thousand feet, vaguely picking a way by the snow-gleam, to where the orange dots of the station lights threw a welcome warmly. Then down and down by the last clanking mountain train to a living world with people and trees and fire again.

The inn at Garmisch was snug and cosy, and a great meal comforting. Only in the middle of it, fork half-way to mouth, a lightning thought drove through my mind like a white-hot needle—

*Habbakuk was left up there !*

I stopped dead, unable to think for a moment. Twelve hours' march away, and to-morrow at sun-up I must be gone. Besides, one might wander for days on those rocky slopes and vast snow-banks and never find the spot again. The mountains never give back what they have won.

Habbakuk had set the standard of the forest upon the roof of the world, and perished in the doing of it. The earth was Pan's again, and Habbakuk was its conqueror.

*Ach, mein armes Habbakükchen, mein liebes altes Habbakukerl !*  
Good-bye ! There was never a staff like you. One summer when August comes round again and the days are long, I will climb to the top of the world once more and lay a sprig of Dorset willow on your grave, for you must be a little lonely up there sometimes. And I must tell the Giant of Cerne.

RODNEY COLLIN.

## SEQUEL TO GALATEA.

BY FLETCHER ALLEN.

THERE was laughter on Olympus.

Pygmalion, on his way to the stone-yard, heard suspicious noises which he did not recognise. They came at him from the outside, and there were voices within that drowned the laughter.

He took himself seriously as he walked along the marbled road, staring at the pavement. When, rarely, he looked up it was to ridicule the columns of the buildings, full of imperfection and unevenness.

His heart and his fingers ached.

In the stone-yard he wandered like a cat in an abattoir, seeking precisely the piece that would satisfy him. At last he came to it—a block of marble, square and rough-hewn, in which there was a suggestion of light and colour.

The merchant knew him. The whole city knew him. He had done one or two useful bits of stonework. He had a sense of form and contour, although sometimes people said he was much too new-fashioned, was deserting art for sensation.

‘I’d like that,’ said Pygmalion.

‘I’ll lend it to you, to work on,’ replied the merchant. ‘But remember it’s mine until it’s paid for!’

‘As you like,’ said the sculptor. ‘Send it quickly.’

Towards evening they put the stone where he could work on it, and Pygmalion laid out his tools. Then he sat staring at the crude block, wondering what it contained.

He was a young man, with eyes that were penetrating and dreamy. They could see into stone and into life, but not into the ways of men and women.

Until the dawn he sat, staring. About midnight, Isocrates, coming from the wine-shop, had looked in on his friend and tried to rouse him, but Isocrates was drunk with wine and Pygmalion was drunk with vision. So Isocrates had gone, wondering what new drug the sculptor had discovered that could so change his countenance.

The sun, creeping round the corner of the hills, touched the

marble, and threw the shadow of a cloud across it. Pygmalion awoke, for the stone seemed to tremble. He saw the thing it contained.

For a month neither stone merchant nor friends knew much of the sculptor save for an occasional glimpse of him as he walked, head in the air, down the street. In those days they said of Pygmalion that he was stupid with debauch. That was only rumour.

Cut off from the sight of his friends, the marble was taking shape as he intended it. He worked under the pressure of a great urge. Something new, even to his art, had crept into him. He was fevered with anticipation, amazed by the magic that had been lent to him.

It was his word; 'lent.' In the presence of the thing that was growing under his hands, he was humble enough to know that not entirely of his imagining had such beauty been born. Voices from Olympus grew more definite in his ears, although not yet did he recognise either what they said, or whence they came. Only he knew that a perfect thing was coming into being, and with its perfection, a fierce desire.

He stood away from the finished work and saw his ideal of womanhood. It was he who had carved her forehead, her full, languorous eyes, her open, alluring countenance. He who had been given power to mould the torso, the arms and legs. Beauty incarnate, but not incarnate. Beauty imprisoned in stone. Beauty irresistible, unyielding.

With a cry he flung himself at the feet of the statue. His warm, muscular arms held the marble for a moment.

'Oh, that you lived, that I might adore you,' he cried.

On the higher hills his cry was heard, and the gods, themselves a little intoxicated, laughed again.

'Well, let it be so!' they said.

Pygmalion was unaware of the miracle that happened. He did not see the slow mounting of colour, did not feel the quickening of the stone; was ignorant of any change until, it seemed, from nowhere, a purely feminine voice addressed him.

'But you are hurting me!'

Then, without relaxing his grip on her ankles, he lifted his eyes and beheld Galatea alive, looking down on him. There was a frown of pain in her eyes which clouded her face for a moment, but a smile of satisfaction on her lips. Then Pygmalion realised what he was doing. Stone could withstand such pressure as he

was exercising, but not flesh and blood. He loosed her feet and stood with hands outstretched.

Naturally, since she was the embodiment of his ideal, love was instant with him; and as naturally, because he had created her, had endowed her with all perfection, she could do no other than respond.

They set up a little establishment together, after the fashion of the city, and he made his friends welcome, watching their amazement at her beauty, while she, with the soul of a creature torn from bondage, treasured all that he said and did.

She understood neither the sly wit of Isocrates, nor the direct advances of Dion. Everything was strange to her, but she laughed when they laughed; or rather, when Pygmalion laughed. When he frowned, she stormed; not at him, but at the thing that had caused his frown.

Isocrates, habitually unsober, finding her alone one day while Pygmalion was at the stone-yard, sought to resolve all the rumour that had spread about the city.

'Tell me, Galatea,' he said, 'where do you come from?'

Bewildered, she looked at him.

'What do you mean—where do I come from?' she replied. 'I have always been here.'

Because her lord's friend laughed, she laughed; but when her lord returned, she repeated the question.

'Where do I come from?'

Pygmalion, a little alarmed by the question, answered her with another.

'Is it not enough, Galatea, that you are here?'

That sufficed her. Anything Pygmalion did or said sufficed her. She had no mind apart from him. Nor did he discuss further with her what men said, or what questions they asked. It was enough for him to behold her beauty, to adore her.

Yet some time after, when Dion, profiting by the sight of Pygmalion discussing terms in the market-place, hastened to discover Galatea alone, she found herself strangely troubled by the capering youth with vine-leaves in his hair.

'Why did you do that?' she asked, as he suddenly ceased his farical dancing and sat, staring at her.

'Why does any man lose his head when also he loses his heart?' he replied. 'Who is Pygmalion, that he should keep you cloistered from life?'

When Pygmalion returned, Galatea repeated, faithfully, all that had happened; told how Dion had hastened to her, having seen his friend abroad on business; told how he had made love to her with eyes and words and disturbing questions, repeating his last question, word for word.

'Who is Pygmalion, that he should keep you cloistered from life?' echoed her creator. 'He is the one who formed you and cut you from stone, beheld you perfect and prayed that you might live. And the gods heard. You do live.'

She did not understand, thinking, indulgently, that it was more of the extravagant language of artists. Whenever the question was put to her again, she answered in Pygmalion's words, until at last the city began to laugh.

'Pygmalion cut a thing like that out of stone? A man incapable of distinguishing between a curve and a straight line? Who gives women necks like swans, and feet like geese, and calls it art? Impossible! Else, why has he produced nothing since?'

There were, of course, kindly neighbours who carried the gossip to Galatea, and since she could keep no secret, it was immediately recounted to Pygmalion.

'True,' he said. 'They may ask that. Perhaps it is time I went to work again.'

Which he did, instantly, and put Galatea where the light shone on her, while he attacked another piece of marble. What better model could he have than perfection! But, strive as he would, there was nothing of inspiration—better work was being done by the stone-cutter's apprentice. When he regarded it, he lost his temper.

Perhaps he saw Galatea in a different light. For some reason or other, the house knew him no more that day. And when Dion and Isocrates came to find him, all they saw was Galatea, still standing where he had left her, patiently awaiting her lord's return. She told them what had happened, and they went, but Dion, who was more than half-mad, turned to Isocrates with a question.

'Did you notice anything strange about her?' he said.

'Nothing out of the way,' replied Isocrates. 'Save the beginning of a slight impatience, perhaps, but one is accustomed to that in wives and models.'

'Not that,' said Dion. 'I meant the look of her. Seeing her standing there, I could well believe she were marble. There was the colour of old stone about her.'



They went on, Isocrates disinclined to pay attention to the caprice of Pygmalion, but Dion disturbed.

There was this about Dion: he heard voices that no other man heard. Just then it seemed that he heard laughter—strangely familiar laughter, and the curtain of his mind cleared for a moment. So that he left Isocrates even before they reached the wine-shop, and ran in search of Pygmalion whom he found on the side of a hill, watching the sunset.

The sculptor was by no means pleased to receive his friend at that moment, but seeing him running across the grass towards him, he stood and waited to hear what Dion had to say. The lad, with his eyes blazing and his cheeks flushed as though he had been drinking, swung Pygmalion round and pointed his face towards the city.

'They may not believe it,' he cried. 'But I believe it! You did carve her out of stone. You did cry that she might be flesh and blood that you could adore her. And the gods heard you, and the gods laughed. They are still laughing. I heard them this afternoon. I heard them discussing you and her. Flesh and blood for you to adore her, Pygmalion! Cease to adore her and she goes back to stone. I saw it, too! We sought you at your house.'

Pygmalion laughed.

'Too much wine brings vision, Dion,' he sneered. 'It quickens ears to voices that do not speak, and imagination to things that can never be. But listen, Dion. So long as I strove for perfection, I sometimes found a little beauty. After I had achieved perfection, there was no beauty to discover. Galatea has killed all inspiration. When I speak, she echoes what I say. What I think, she thinks after me. She quarrels with my friends when they irritate me, but she will not quarrel with me. There is no motion to my life again.'

'But this is foolish,' cried Dion. 'These are words of no meaning. I tell you, who love Galatea, that only your affection can keep her warm. What matter if you waste your stone in the cutting? That will pass! Get you back to your home, Pygmalion.'

Pygmalion submitted to Dion's guidance, not because he believed his friend, but because he still had some need of the presence of Galatea, was still capable of being moved by the thought of her suffering. Together they descended the hill.

Passing the wine-shop, Isocrates saw them, and made room

that they might sit beside him. As they sat he poured out wine for them.

'This young madman has been tormenting you, Pygmalion,' he laughed. 'With his fancies of Galatea turning to her fabled stone. But there is news in the city! Zenos demands a statue to his wife. This to have all human perfections portrayed in stone, and at a price to establish the sculptor in comfort for all his days.'

The laughter that shook Pygmalion was akin to the laughter that, earlier, had stirred Dion.

'Who cuts in stone all human perfections is damned to discomfort all his days,' he replied. 'So, I carved Galatea, and have gone hungry since! What wine is this?'

He poured himself wine, and more wine. The three drank until the shadows disappeared in darkness. But, after the habit of their kind, they discussed the statue to Zenos's wife round and about. And when they parted, Pygmalion stumbled home with the taunt of Isocrates in his ears.

'If you can't be original again, a copy would serve, and the copy of Galatea would be greater than any new creation this city has seen.'

Dion, aflame with his peculiar madness, struck Isocrates to the earth, and following after Pygmalion, cried 'Pay no heed! What is it to you? Far better to possess perfection than seek to copy it!'

In the house, Galatea, who had long abandoned the hope of Pygmalion returning in time for further work, had gone about her little duties. There was a slender, ill-cooked meal for him as he entered, which he ate grumblingly, the while he discussed with her the possibilities of winning the commission for Zenos's statue.

She could do no more than repeat after him all that he said. Plenty or little made no difference to her. The word 'comfort' was alien to her in the way Pygmalion used it.

'What does it mean to be established in comfort all your days?' she asked.

'Well, if you want to know,' stormed Pygmalion, 'it means not having to think how we shall buy bread and wine. Not having to argue prices for bits of stone.'

'Oh,' said Galatea. 'I thought perhaps it meant something else.'

'And what do you think it means?' snapped Pygmalion.

'I don't know unless you tell me,' she replied. 'But when first I came, you said that because I had come, nothing else mattered.'

'Perhaps I did,' said Pygmalion. 'But we had food in the house then.'

Yet he could not quite bring himself to say all that was on his mind, and since he could not stir her to anger, or bring a quickening bitterness to her tongue, he went to bed, there being nothing else to do.

In the morning he arose with the thought of Zenos and his prize, and again placed Galatea in the posture that he best remembered, and tried to model a little; but the gift was gone. Idly he sat staring out through the window, listening to the chatter of the street, and the rattling of chariots. The contented laughter of the passers-by irked him. He remembered the supreme quality of the last piece of work he had done, and turned again to Galatea, standing patiently waiting for him to begin to work.

'Would to the gods,' he cried, 'that they had not heard me when I prayed that you might breathe and be alive!'

There was laughter on the hills. Even as he looked at her, Galatea's skin paled, and the light went from her eyes. Stiff, but with a suggestion of motion; congealed, but with a promise of life, she stood as she was when first he threw away his chisel and adored her. Closely he looked, and, to make sure, stood and approached her, took her hands and felt them cold, rang steel on her thighs, and was content.

Of all the work Zenos considered, there was none to approach the statue Pygmalion submitted. Here indeed was the embodiment of all human perfection, even to the hint of a smile that was half a sigh.

In the wine-shop three elderly men discussed art. A younger generation was in the streets. Fresher hands and minds were creating, while these three contented themselves with talk; but the younger men, as they came in to drink, looked over to the corner. New-comers learned that the old man who spilled his wine into his beard and muttered, and was mad, had done one perfect thing; but nothing else.

'A quaint old fellow, that. They say he goes up to the Necropolis each day, as the sun goes down, to worship the stone he cut.'

Even while the men at the benches were sipping their wine, the sun crept round and touched the pillars towards the east. It

was the sign for Pygmalion to rise. With an awkward gesture he brushed the moisture from his beard, and flung a few coins on to the table in payment.

‘Wait for me, Isocrates,’ he said. ‘And you, Dion, unless other things press. I must go. It may be that these old hands can still cut a bit of stone!’

Of habit the two whom he left maintained the pretence. Day after day the same little pantomime occurred. Never did Pygmalion tell them the truth. It was always the suggestion of work to be done. But they knew.

Straight from the wine-shop and up the hill, Pygmalion climbed, to where Galatea stood on her pedestal, comprehending all human perfection, comprehending nothing—not even the old man who knelt by her, kissing her feet.

## THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS:

## I. FLUID FRONTIERS.

THERE is or was, for I am not aware if he is alive, a German Professor, Adolf Bartels, who persistently sustains a wrong theory of national literature. He declares that 'literature only becomes universal when it is a complete expression of nationalism, or a nation's soul,' and in his longest book, which runs to just less than a million words, he has illustrated this principle by a history of world-literature tacked on to and hung round the life and work of Goethe. As a fact—but I prefer to state this fact in the words of Benedetto Croce, who, premising that 'Italian patriotic criticism never' (not even during the War) 'attained such heights of folly, of deliberate, methodical folly, as we see in Bartels,' asserts in straight contradiction that 'it is not true that poets or other artists are expressions of nationality, race, blood, class, party, or anything else of the kind.' They express *themselves*, adds Croce, and

'the history of a people's literature, the history of a national literature, if it be properly understood, can only be a collection of essays on various writers born in a certain country, and can never come to constitute a history of *Deutschtum*, as Bartels would make his, or of *Frenchtum*, *Italianum*, *Englishtum*, or the like.'

The ordinary critic, midway or near it between Croce and Bartels, gives up time more readily than space. When Ben Jonson said of Shakespeare, for example, 'He was not of an age but for all time,' he took him out of the time-relation and universalised him in that respect. But critics have been slower and more reluctant to universalise Shakespeare in space. The Swan of Avon is a potamic epithet for so oceanic a mind and is not much in vogue to-day, but no historian of English literature damps down his patriotic joy in Shakespeare to the tepidity of one essay among others on a writer who happened to be born in England. We are more tenacious of space than of time, doubtless because of its tangible quality. We even bequeath little parcels of it, and illude ourselves with a sense of possessing it. 'He was not of a country but for all places' is a piece of Shakespearean criticism commoner on the Continent than at home.

Yet our local patriotism, temperate though it be, is not much

more serviceable to Shakespeare than the patriotism turned nationalism and merged into jingoism which Bartels wraps around Goethe. It does not merit the same measure of rebuke as Croce hurled at the German critic, but it is a restriction in the same kind. For what Shakespeare took from English soil is less than what he gave to the world, and less too than what he took from it. The true history of English literature must be written in its relation to foreign sources and in its relation to foreign seas. National and foreign are names of little meaning in literary historiography.

History and biography are not the same art. Mr. Guedalla in his new life of Wellington receives due credit for the fact that his account of the Duke after Waterloo is ampler than ever before. This means that earlier biographers were more careful of the historical canon. For Waterloo was the culmination of a world-career and what followed was a trickle on English soil. So, there is a biography of a nation's literature which differs from its history. Still keeping to the water likeness it might be stated in this way. The history of literature is a river which flows through all countries. Tributary to that central flood are the streams rising in each country. Until they join the river they have no part in its history. Their histories till then are national literary biographies. And if and when their waters find a channel out of the main river the course of that channel is again local and national, and becomes the business of a biographer not a historian. There is one history of literature with many tributary episodes. Wellington meeting Napoleon contributed to the history of the world; Wellington as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports is a figure in local history.

‘Es bildet ein Talent sich in der Stille,  
Sich ein Charakter in dem Strom der Welt.’

Literary history more readily than political may be written *sub specie universi*. For men of letters unlike politicians have nothing to gain from the State. They do not add territories or make treaties, nor risk impeachment in a battle of books. Over and over again human annals illustrate the confusion of these parts. When men of letters are men of action, it is the literature which suffers. Philip Sidney, Cervantes, Milton, Rupert Brooke—who will deny that in an ideal State their destiny would have been happier? ‘Tomando ora la espada, ora la pluma,’ wrote Garcilasso de la Vega in his third eclogue, and his brief glory (1503–36) is a reminder that, though the pen is mightier than



the sword, the sword is sometimes fatal to the pen. The contribution of men of letters to national increase is not in the same kind as that of men of action. Their aim is not to close frontiers or to defend them from invasion; it is to open them and keep the traffic fluid. Our own recent war-poets showed forth this truth with noble courage, with the courage of noble men of letters. Defending temporal possessions, they yet kept their sense of space and time. Love, joy, summer, duty, earth, and starlight, the common names of mother and wife, were not for a country but for mankind.

There is one history of literature. On what ground do historians part their task into national enclosures? Language, the main *differentia*, is surely not a final test. For one thing, the chief languages of Europe have foliated from a single stem. Take the literary word 'romance,' for example, which still preserves through all its fascinating changes the imperial memory of ancient Rome. The romanticists who spilt so much ink in a vain attempt to distinguish themselves from classicists forgot that their name bewrayed them. Since every century is romantic and writes romances, why sort its products into sealed boxes? Moreover, how shall they be sorted? Erasmus was born in Rotterdam and Thomas More was one of many children born to a judge of the King's Bench. But Dutch and English though they were by birth, and though Holland and England have fought on sea and land, they were brothers who spoke the same tongue. They and others compelled Europe to be at one across her dividing frontiers and estranging seas. 'Has Nature ever moulded anything gentler, pleasanter or happier than the mind of Thomas More?' wrote Erasmus in one of his letters. How did he know it? Not by spelling out More's writings with the help of an English-Dutch dictionary, nor by missing their delight between the lines of a Dutch translation, but because they were written in his native language, the language made native to his art. More and Erasmus, with Colet and Budé and other sweet scholars and saints, used Latin in a league of nations more potent than that in session at Geneva. To call it an international language is a misstatement of its claim. Wars and treaties are international; ambassadors use an international tongue in order to avoid the one or make the other. But literature is national in the higher sense that, despite the divisions between countries, it is the native possession of all alike, and more than once it has insisted on its right to speak to all alike athwart the barriers.

To read a history of English literature instead of a biography of literature in England as subsidiary to the history of literature is a mean and an imperfect thing. For there is a necessary background to English literature which takes us far from our shores. The Bible, for example. Everyone knows J. R. Green's fine apostrophe to the influence of the Authorised Version on the language, life and character of the people:

'As a mere literary monument the English version of the Bible remains the noblest example of the English tongue, while its perpetual use made it from the instant of its appearance the standard of our language. . . . But far greater than its effect on literature or social phrase was the effect of the Bible on the character of the people at large. . . . The whole nation became a church.' Or take Greece, for example. The whole nation to-day has become an areopagus in the plain sense that every man and woman has a vote. Yet whence do we get the sense of judgment on which its exercise depends? I was reading a little book the other day on the history of the science of politics which the eminent jurist, Sir Frederick Pollock, first wrote as a lecture-course in 1882 and which is still current after fifty years. There he says:

'As Greece is to us the mother of almost everything that makes life worthy to be lived, so is Aristotle especially the father of science and scientific method, and during the centuries when the lessons of Greece were forgotten, the name and work of Aristotle (used indeed in a manner and for purposes which he would have marvelled at) were almost the only links which still bound the modern to the Hellenic world.'

And Sir Henry Maine, about twenty years Pollock's senior and his teacher in law, declared even more roundly:

'Except the blind forces of Nature, nothing moves in this world which is not Greek in its origin.'

There were centuries—it is common knowledge—whole, long, obscure centuries, 'when the lessons of Greece were forgotten,' just as there were whole long centuries when 'the standard of our language' was hidden in the matrix of a Latin version of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. It is still fascinating to revisit those dark ages and to try to answer the questions, Where was Aristotle before he was recovered for his function as the father of scientific method, and who were the carriers of Hellenism when no one knew Greek? Scholars have tackled these questions and are always illuminating their researches with fresh light. The

Oxford *Legacy* volumes and Sir John Sandys's *History of Classical Scholarship* contain most of the facts available up to date. But the point which I want to make now is at once simpler and more pertinent. Here is this large double force which broke in on the fastness of English literature: the Bible which standardised our language and affected the character of the people at large, and Greece which is inseparable from nearly everything which moves in the modern world. Each is a non-English force, though both have been naturalised in England, and how shall we study English literature or any other form of art-expression without first taking account of the background of antiquity behind it?

Petrarch, the earliest modern man, as Renan so happily described him, the keen, indefatigable student from whom most truly proceeded the movements known as Renaissance and Reformation—twins of a single birth—was fully, even painfully aware of the urgent significance of the pagan background. In front of him was Italy resurgent from the darkness of the centuries without Aristotle. The shining series of little states, Rome, Naples, Florence, Venice and the rest, 'each city a starlike seat of rival glory,' were forging links of trade and communication, opening hotels for the accommodation of foreign merchants, working out economic and civil codes, organising pageants and folk-plays to recommend their markets and processions, painting pictures to hang in their halls, writing poems to enliven their feasts and eulogies and elegies for their magistrates—building for the future all the time. Petrarch foresaw this eager life, this new life of business and pleasure. His ode to Italy was quoted by Machiavelli, restoring courage to Italian princes. But Petrarch throwing himself avidly into the future of modern Italy returned intuitively to her buried past. He insisted on the value of the background. The Latin background linguistically at any rate was preserved in the Vulgate Bible, and in the common use of Latin on its native soil. He insisted on perfecting that instrument. He toiled and moiled up steep hills to lonely monasteries in order to grub about in their dusty libraries where chance might have deposited a manuscript of a classical Latin book. And what joy when his search was rewarded, and the brave adventurer brought home the mouldered and faded leaves which yielded to his tired eyes and worn-out fingers the hardly decipherable text of a lost oration of Cicero! Not scholarship but life was his quest. He sought the fountains of living waters which would

restore ancient Rome for modern uses. Nor was he content with the Latin background. He ardently wanted to learn Greek, and to recall it from the dark centuries in which the lessons of Hellas had been forgotten. This student without tools would have given ten years of his life for a Greek-Italian dictionary by which to spell out the text of Homer. He was compelled to take recourse to strange substitutes, and he induced his friend Boccaccio to give houseroom to an uncouth Calabrian who hammered out for the first Homerists of Europe a rough Latin translation of the Iliad. All this is a thrice-told tale, but it is told more often in histories of classical studies than in histories of modern studies. Yet it is essential to the latter. It is an intimate chapter in the history of English literature. Petrarch wanted to know Greek in order to live and write *al Italico modo*, <sup>part</sup> of his work for and with Boccaccio, out of the zeal with which he infected the great Florentine, spread directly the influence of the Renaissance which passed through Chaucer into England. Petrarch went to the past for the future, and to ancient learning for modern wit.

The common background rebukes the pretensions of critics who claim an exclusive possession in a nation's literature. The Bible, Homer, Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Virgil—these are among the supernational forces which abolish the barriers of grammarians and obliterate the frontiers of kings. Long before Englishmen began to write these writings were awaiting exploration. No English book was written at home which was not immensely indebted to foreign travel.

But there is more to it than this. There is a wide no-man's-land of literature, which is bigger than some fenced-in territories. A French romancer put it into verse in the thirteenth century:

‘Ne sont que trois matières à nul homme entendant—  
De France, et de Bretagne, et de Rome la grant.’

It is not very good verse and it wants a lot of footnotes, but the gist of the thing is there. Three great stockpots of literary material are at the disposal of any writer in any language and are the individual property of none. ‘France,’ ‘Bretagne,’ or ‘Rome la grant’ may be decocted by Spaniards or Poles, but the resultant books are not all-Spanish or all-Polish. They are merely local variants of a common theme, and their separate dress of language and style lends them only a limited originality. Briefly and summarily here we may see what these three ‘matters’ are, in order

more nearly to measure the size of the excepted properties. 'France' generally was Germany: at least, the ex-Kaiser would like us to call it so, and the boundaries have frequently been moved. It is the whole gamut of tales in which the central figure is Charlemagne, whose beard grew as long as his legend, and whose heroic deeds and those of his paladins were told by wandering gleemen in endless *chansons de geste*, selected, adapted and expanded according to the taste of the reciter and the audience. 'Bretagne' generally was the realm in which King Arthur fought his twelve battles, and here too an enormous accretion of legendary lore grew over the Knights of the Table Round; and 'Rome la grant' represents antiquity, the tales of Thebes and Troy and the glamorous fables of the Orient, particularly perhaps of Alexander, whose adventurous travels were spread to fairyland and paradise. Here was matter enough to furnish epicist and romancer, ballad-writer, songsmith and prose-narrator with writings of all kinds differing only by the dialect of his district. To distinguish them by languages into countries and to claim them as regional products is as futile as to monopolise the sunshine. Malory took from 'French books' the kingly lore which Tennyson rendered into English idylls, and this is but one supreme example stretching across several centuries of the dependence of our literature upon others.

Others, of course, depended upon ours. From first to last we find that we gave as freely as we took, not indeed as much in bulk but as generously in intention. We taught Europe to weep, for example, a very wholesome lesson in the eighteenth century. Boileau, the hammer of boors, sealed up the springs of emotion. There was nothing common in his complex; Freud himself would have been puzzled to strip him to psychological nakedness. The French scene in the reign of Louis XIV, when Boileau was lawgiver to Parnassus—the king and critic were almost exact contemporaries—displayed the use of authority in taste but was unduly timorous of liberty. Everything which claimed taste showed regularity, from the arrangement of a posy to a declaration of love. Sir Leslie Stephen, once Editor of the CORNHILL, put the point very neatly when he said:

'As the social changes in the eighteenth century give new influence to the middle classes and then to the democracy, the aristocratic class, which represented the culture of the opening stage, is gradually pushed aside; its methods become antiquated, and its conventions cease to represent the ideals of the most vigorous part of the population.'

Boileau died in 1711 and Louis in 1715; *Robinson Crusoe* was published in 1719, *Gulliver's Travels* in 1726, Thomson's *Seasons* in 1726-40, and Richardson's *Pamela* in 1741. The cumulative effect of these books, to which may be added Young's *Night Thoughts* of 1742-5 and Gray's *Elegy* of 1751, on France and Germany was enormous. They terminated the reign of Boileau and of the little Boileau at Leipzig, J. C. Gottsched. It was such a comfort to be natural, even common, without the obligation to methodise Nature or to dress her to advantage. Surprise was brought back to literature and the quick prick of the unexpected. Men of letters became apprentices to experience, and Byron at a later date, repeating the method of shock-tactics, put at the top of the First Canto of *Childe Harold* a quotation from Foucheret de Monbron's *Cosmopolite* of 1753:

'L'univers est une espèce de livre, dont on n'a pas lu que la première page quand on n'a vu que son pays.'

What would the Court of Louis XIV, so deftly ridiculed by Molière and so much regretted by Saint-Simon, have made of *Robinson Crusoe* on his island or of Captain Gulliver in the country of the Houyhnhnms, where

'was neither physician to destroy my body, nor lawyer to ruin my fortune; . . . no encouragers to vice by seducement or examples; . . . no pride, vanity, or affectation; no fops, bullies, drunkards, strolling whores, or poxes; . . . no lords, fiddlers, judges, or dancing-masters'

and where all the company of Louis was expropriated?

This was England's gift to an age which had deemed Paris the centre of the universe and good taste the sum of complete living. The manufacture of *Robinsonaden* in Germany and the invention of that name for the class is a measure of Defoe's bounty.

Richardson's bounty was really in the same kind. At the instance of the booksellers, it will be remembered, he set about writing 'two or three letters to instruct handsome girls who were obliged to go out to service, as we phrase it, how to avoid the snares that might be laid against their virtue.' To instruct them, that is to say, in the code of the Houyhnhnms instead in that of *le roi Soleil*. It was a much more glittering business for the ladies' maids and the valets to pander to the vices of their superiors and to make a miniature *salon* of the servants' hall. But Richardson, conscious of 'the ideals of the most vigorous part of the popula-



tion,' earned his fame as a best-seller by showing the other side of the medal. He gave the servant's point of view. His theme was 'virtue rewarded' not virtue seduced. Swift's satire had stripped the cavalry-man of the splendour of his uniform and accoutrements and had revealed him as no hero to his horse. Defoe had displayed a common man at the back of civilisation, dependent wholly on his own resources, and now Pamela relied on her woman's instincts to protect her virtue from the customs of society. Gallantry had to look to its credentials. The basis of social values was revised. Humble life and mean and base personages<sup>1</sup> were readmitted to the company of the noble. Across the hedges of Pope's garden and the parterres of Versailles, rusticity became respectable once more, and fine ladies delicately shod deigned to visit churchyards in Buckinghamshire.

This 'return to nature,' as Rousseau called it, though the name is a tangle of contrary meanings, was originally an English counsel, and the way back lay along a stream of tears. It was at first a relief and then a joy to weep, for grief too had been regulated by *bon sens*. Consider, for instance, the kind of grief which Edmund Waller in 1637 deemed appropriate for the expression of Lord Northumberland on the occasion of his lady's death :

'To this great loss a sea of tears is due,'

the poet conceded to the bereaved widower,

'But the whole debt not be paid by you.'

The eminent man had sacrificed 'a part of youth and private bliss' in the cause of public service, and should share his sorrow in the same proportions :

'Give your friends a right

As well in your affliction as delight,  
Then with Æmilian courage bear the cross,  
Since public persons only public loss  
Ought to affect.'

Stifling a passing wonder as to what would have been Queen Victoria's response if Waller had been her Poet Laureate, we observe that Lord Northumberland was warned that, though his wife's

<sup>1</sup> 'Because the actions of mean and base personages tend in very few cases to any great good example . . . therefore was nothing committed to history but matters of great and excellent persons and things.—Puttenham, *Of Poets and Poesy*, 1584.

'Form and youth . . .

Might give excuse to any common breast,  
With the huge weight of so great grief oppressed,'

yet a Percy should not be common. He was enjoined accordingly to

'let no portion of your life be stained  
With passion, but your character maintained  
To the last act.'

A time was to come when it was proper to be common, when Richardson would repair to the servants' hall, and George Lillo, inventor of romantic drama, would draw his 'scene's distress' 'from lower life,' and the friendship of death would be recommended by intimate musings at the graveside and by the imitation of chapels and urns in the ornamentation of pleasure-gardens, inviting the joy of grief and even the consolation of suicide. France and Germany opened wide doors to this tide of human emotion.

The door was kept open by readers in every country. Tieck and the Schlegels were busy translators and aimed at making Shakespeare a German author. Madame de Staël, whose public life has just been rewritten by Mr. McNair Wilson, was a kind of *commis-voyageuse* in foreign books, carrying French wares to Germany and German wares to England, and maintaining the principles of Free Trade. There is the signal example of Bürger's *Lenore*. It is often mentioned in literary histories, but it is not always recalled that Bürger, who burnt out his short life in the second half of the eighteenth century, is described by Max Müller as the most eminent member of the Göttingen 'Hainbund': at least, the meaning of the term is not always clear. Little Göttingen with its University and Academy, both founded in or near 1750, was the spiritual and actual home of a group of young and ardent poets who were united by common devotion to the pealing muse of Klopstock. They had their paper, the *Musen Almanach*, and they had their *Hain*, or grove of trees, in which, with oak-leaves on their hats, which they deposited on the ground, they used to dance solemnly by moonlight, invoking Klopstock and their brotherhood. It was a very innocent orgy, and we should not spy on it to-day except for the boon of Bürger's ballad in an *Almanach* of 1774. The industrious William Taylor translated it in 1795 in the second issue of the *Monthly Magazine*. Lamb wrote about it ecstatically to Coleridge, who remembered it in his *Ancient Mariner*, and Scott, who had heard it read aloud,

imitated it in the next year in his *William and Helen*. Our frontiers are not fluid to-day. Our Scotts, Coleridges, and Lambs, if indeed we possess such masters, are not so keenly on the look out for foreign models of verse. We leave the models to the dressmakers, and the heading 'Imitated from the "Lenore" of Bürger' would no longer recommend a poem which spread through literary Europe like a flame.

This policy of the open door in literature could be illustrated from many periods in our annals. Chaucer, of course, was a busy bagman. If there is an association of commercial travellers they might celebrate this year the 560th anniversary of his visit to Italy in 1372 in the cause of the English wool-trade. He combined with that mission a direct interest in poetry, and is reputed by Jusserand to have met Boccaccio as well as Petrarch, though the evidence as to the former is doubtful. Anyhow, he placed England under perpetual obligation to Petrarch, the 'worthy clerk,'

'whose rhetoric sweet  
Enlumined all Italy of poetry.'

Further, he entered into negotiations, which were to prove most fruitful in the future, with 'Virgil, Ovid, Omer, Lucan, Stace.' (H)omer, as we have seen, was but the shadow of a name, known in the dawn of the new Humanism only by Latin paraphrases, but Ovid, whose 'sweet, witty soul' was to live again in 'melifluous Shakespeare,' and the rest of the Romans, including Boece (Boethius) of the sixth century A.D., became henceforward a part of the English heritage. Chaucer's employer, Edward III, died in 1377, and there ensued a somewhat barren century without decisive foreign contacts, but after 1476, when Caxton had set up his printing-press in Westminster, a brisk exchange of commodities began again. Thomas More was inspired to write *Utopia* whilst serving as a diplomatist in Flanders; Spenser wanted to 'overgo' Ariosto; Marlowe imported a cargo of Machiavellism; Milton represented our Signor Tasso; Pope specialised in *Louis Quatorze*. What we brought to and took from the revolutionaries at the end of the eighteenth century would fill a volume in the history of literary commerce, and our relations with France in the nineteenth would form a fascinating supplement.

Similar chapters will be found in histories of foreign literature. They are sometimes sensational in character, and 'if a touch of the Yellow Press were introduced into the sober records of book-

lore, historians might unfold tales more exciting than stories of war. Indeed, when armaments are cut down and warfare is reduced to police-work we may have to seek from books the brightness departed from battles and to thrill to ink instead of blood. Then it will be related in bold type how a prince's ambassador brought Italian metres to rustic Spain and how a captive king in person brought Spanish romances home to France. For love which laughs at locksmiths is not less contemptuous of national frontiers. We speak of the United States of Europe as a dream of civilisation yet to be. But in fact it has been. Schools of painting, as we saw in the Dutch pictures and as we see in the French pictures this year, are schools of one art in Europe and express what is common to many countries; and if words, like paints, were delocalised, and books, like pictures, could be seen at a glance, the national schools of literature would likewise display their common features. The Arthur school, the Bible school, the Greco-Roman school, would be collected out of their several libraries and hung together for comparison, and the comparative critic would be surprised at the resemblance which language conceals. Now and then such a critic arises. One is living in Bath in old age, who wrote towards the end of his 'new Hallam':

'The successive waves of German, English, and French Romanticism rolled by degrees into all the other countries of Europe, reviving the older literatures, and encouraging the appearance of new, in nations which had hitherto done little, and which had exercised influence not even in proportion to what they had actually done.'<sup>1</sup>

This tightly packed statement of a succession of remarkable phenomena, however inadequately grasped, at least supports our first proposition that the literature of Europe is a tidal sea, not a series of inland lakes. Sometimes, too, a writer arises whose work makes that conclusion inescapable. We are told by the same critic that it was mainly the writings of Goethe which 'brought about the last great change that has been seen in European literature.' Goethe died on March 22, 1832, and the near centenary of his death suggests matter for a second article on this topic.

<sup>1</sup> *Periods of European Literature*—XII. *The Later Nineteenth Century*, by George Saintsbury, Edinburgh, 1907; pp. 449-50.

### LITERARY ACROSTICS.

A LITERARY ACROSTIC is published every month, and the Editor of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers two prizes to the most successful solvers. The winners will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. If several solvers send solutions of equal merit, the two whose answers are opened first will win the prizes.

#### DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 102.

'Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
While —— and hero fell.'

'Farewell the neighing ——, and the shrill trump.'

1. 'A thousand —— beat happily; and when  
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again.'
2. 'A lovely Apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ——.'
3. 'Rich and —— were the gems she wore,  
And a bright gold ring on her wand she bore.'
4. 'Sweet, be not proud of those two eyes,  
Which starlike —— in their skies.'
5. 'Now joy, Old ——, raise!  
For the tidings of thy might.'

## RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page viii of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue; and he must be careful to give also his real name and address.
4. Solvers should not write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.
5. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.
6. Answers to Acrostic No. 102 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50 Albemarle Street, London, W.1, and must arrive not later than February 20. No answers will be opened before this date.

## ANSWER TO No. 101.

1. P leasur E
2. R ol L
3. I slan D
4. M ingl E
5. A marylli S
6. L os T

PROEM: Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, iii, 3.

## LIGHTS:

1. Dryden, *Alexander's Feast*, iii.
2. Burns, *Tam o' Shanter*.
3. Tennyson, *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*.
4. Cowper, *On the Loss of the Royal George*.
5. Milton, *Lycidas*.
6. Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, ii, 7.

Acrostic No. 100 ('Speed Guest'): The two solvers whose answers were the first correct ones opened are Mr. J. P. Hutchison, 10 Randolph Terrace, Stirling, and Miss Wood, 7 Bladud Buildings, Bath; they will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.



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